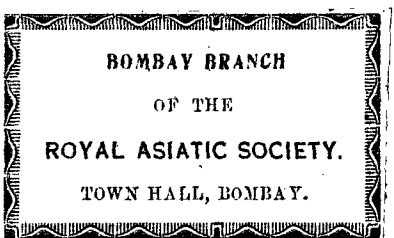

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A DIPLOMATIST'S WIFE IN MANY LANDS

VOL. I



From an original painting.

Mary Crawford
aged 3.

A DIPLOMATIST'S WIFE IN MANY LANDS

BY

MRS. HUGH FRASER

Author of "A Diplomatist's Wife in Japan," etc.

WITH 18 ILLUSTRATIONS

INCLUDING 2 PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECES

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VOL. I

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BY WAY OF PREFACE

ON the closing night of the Nineteenth Century I found myself in the Parish Church of Sant' Agnello di Sorrento, kneeling in the thick crowd that, filling nave and aisle and side chapel, recited the Rosary in unison as the last moments of the hundredth year were knelled away far overhead by the bells in the tower.

With the hush that fell just before midnight, a sense of all that the expiring century had meant to me and mine swept over me in a reality of triumphant possession mingled with much visible loss. The beloved and the revered, the great minds and the holy souls that I had known, these I would find again; but the ancient beauty, the tender, half-whimsical grace of my earthly world was gone for ever, together with the quick enthusiasms and responsive sympathies which made the Nineteenth Century a period of renaissance less definite than, but almost as valuable as, either of the two that had preceded it.

All that was permanently needed of that period has doubtless survived, for intellect and holiness and experience are immortal; but its settings and surroundings have changed or vanished, some gently withdrawn by

the shadowy passing of Time, some crashing into pitiful ruins under the assaults of gross material forces. Time, at any rate, is an indulgent destroyer, and had been kind to the city of my birth, restoring with one hand what it took with the other, clothing her ruins with flowers, her traditions with veneration, veiling her stricken splendour with hazy gold ; so that a little child, running in and out of regal old gardens, fingering half-effaced Latin inscriptions to learn her letters, offering love and prayers and roses indifferently to Saint and goddess, nymph and cherub—all smiling denizens of her wonderful world—could and did believe that that world, as she knew it, had existed from the beginning and would exist for ever, a home for her soul when it should cease to be a home for her body.

Since some excuse will surely be demanded for giving so much space to the opening chapters of my life in these volumes, I will venture to offer it in my desire to perpetuate the memory of what I cannot help regarding as a richer and more beneficent atmosphere than any immediately succeeding years are likely to produce. It was an atmosphere in which thoughts grew slowly into deeds, and Art and Letters were still loyal, though sometimes blundering, handmaids of truth and beauty ; in which public and private ideals were still dominant ; a time when wit and grace and virtue held thrones that money has since vainly tried to buy ; when Learning went majestically on its way, content to leave its unadvertised achievements to the judgment of posterity ; when Religion was accorded at least outward respect ; before half-grown Science had attempted to substitute the

microbe for the Creator, or the doctrine of the immortality of matter and the mortality of mind had been generally accepted ; before modern Art had given us the Poster instead of the Crucifix.

I have lived to see false Science, false Philosophy, false Ethics, discredited. Truth has at last drawn her sword and seems in a fair way to route her enemies. But, until certain now dormant forces of our inexhaustible nature shall have renewed themselves sufficiently to produce another renaissance of spirit, the youth of our epoch lies dead. It was fair and fine in its day, and I hope even this small tribute to its memory may be welcome, alike to those who lived through and with it, and to those who, coming after, can only know it by hearsay, as one of the many fairy tales of Time.

It has been suggested that the title of these volumes may prove misleading, inasmuch as the first is devoted to events which occurred before my marriage. I have nevertheless preferred to let the name stand, partly for the sake of the many friends I was so fortunate as to make by my former book, "A Diplomatist's Wife in Japan," and partly because I was so clearly destined by fate and training to be a pilgrim of the Despatch Box, I feel I can never be grateful enough for all that I saw and learnt in the beloved companionship of one whom Sir Thomas More would have described as "an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country."

One more word of apology may not be out of place. Since my own little record was sometimes bound up with the history of the time, I have included here and there an account of some great event which influenced it, in

order that the reader might be spared the trouble of tracing many allusions to their historical source. Where such digressions occur, great pains have been taken to make them as accurate and reliable as possible. Fearing to be biassed by my own strong sympathies on certain subjects, I have drawn many details and statistics from the writings of honest historians of the opposing side, particularly from Edwin Emerson's "History of the Nineteenth Century, Year by Year," and Dr. Mühlfeld's "Zwanzig Jahre Weltgeschichte für das Deutsche Volk."

My sons, John and Hugh Fraser, have helped me in many ways, and to them I affectionately dedicate these reminiscences, which were written solely at their request.

MARY CRAWFORD FRASER.

August 15, 1910.

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A DIPLOMATIST'S WIFE IN MANY LANDS

CHAPTER I

FAMILY HISTORY

History of my parents and people—A sarcasm of destiny—The bursting seed—My father goes to Rome—Studio and dissecting-room—"Orpheus"—The last franc: food or music?—An unexpected relief—Subsequent successes—My mother—Samuel Ward—How the credit of New York was saved—Jacob Astor and the eggs—Aunt Annie and the Duchess of Sutherland—My father and mother meet in Rome—"Artist" and heiress.

ON the 21st of March, 1811, my father was born, in New England—a sarcasm of destiny, for no child ever came into the world with a temperament more diametrically opposed to all that the name conveys. My grandfather, Aaron Crawford, came of old Scotch-Irish stock; and, in consequence of a quarrel with his people, came over to America, bringing his pretty young wife and infant daughter, and very little else except a few books from Dublin University, where he had been educated, and one or two relics of his old home in Ballyshannon. This was, I think, in the year 1810, and he and my good, beautiful grandmother had some rather hard times afterwards, for no reconciliation ever healed the family feud, and Aaron Crawford's inheritance passed to another relative. His daughter, my Aunt Jennie, took up her

father's quarrel in the good old way, and, after her mother's death in 1855, destroyed every document and memorial connected with the Irish Crawfords. But nothing could eradicate or even modify the Irish temperament as it was transmitted to my dear father. In love with all that was picturesque, hearing from his earliest years the joyous fanfare that life was sounding under other and more glowing skies, urged forward by the passion for production at any cost, his boyhood was passed in attempts to break into the forbidden domain for which his nature clamoured as the only one where it could come to its growth. My gentle little grandmother would sit and wring her hands while her husband went journeying over the country to find the young truant, who adored his parents, but refused to vegetate in their narrow, colourless circle.

Once, when very small, he attached himself to an itinerant band, and marched in their company for two or three days, rewarded for all fatigue and discomfort by the glorious comradeship of flute and cornet. When a little older, he disappeared for some time, and the anxiety about him had reached the highest pitch, when he was discovered in the character of an apprentice to a stone-cutter, in whose workshop he first heard the enchanting ring of the chisel on the marble, a music destined to be the sweetest in his ears to his dying day. He was making good progress with a mantelpiece when his distracted parent found him ; as he had, although but a little lad, signed articles, he had to be bought off, and returned regretfully to the paternal roof. But that experience had shown him his road, and every hope and effort henceforth were devoted to what he vowed should be an artistic career. Italy was very far from New England in the

'thirties, but he prevailed on his family to send him to Rome to study, and then began a correspondence between him and his sister which I wish I had space to transcribe —all the young man's intoxicated delight in the draught of beauty held to his lips, his joy in the gay comradeship of fellow-students and over the encouraging remarks of his masters; and on the sister's side eager sympathy, prophecies of success, rapturous thanks for some gift "Maso" had managed to send from the Eternal City, and news of the old people, and of the home to which it was fondly hoped he would return some day.

But Thomas Crawford had found his real home, and trusted himself to it with jubilant confidence. If his daily life was shorn of every luxury, he was no poorer than most of his friends, the young men who flocked from all over the world to study drawing under Camuccini and modelling under Thorwaldsen. The first years were all chalk and charcoal-drawing from the casts, drawing in the life school, and, for my father, dissecting and drawing in the mortuary of the hospital. Horribly repulsive as this work was, he felt that nothing else would give him the complete and definite knowledge of anatomy which he intended to have. Only the other day, in turning over a quantity of his portfolios, I came upon a mass of sheets containing drawings, half life-size, of every bone and muscle and sinew in the human body—gruesome evidence of his gigantic patience and resolve.

Sculpture was not at its best in the early part of the Nineteenth Century. Eighteenth-century frivolity had died a violent death in the Revolution; when the storm was over and Art rose again the inevitable reaction came. David and his imitators laid a pall of cold conventionality, of affectation and timidity, on plastic art, and it required

the courage of genius to escape from its influence. All that my father produced in that more youthful part of his career was exquisitely correct and graceful, as became the work of a learner, and it was not until the sense of tutelage had passed away that he achieved anything really strong and original. Even then in his lighter hours he lapsed into facile bas-reliefs of classic subjects, in which he gave his redundant imagination full play, but which had little more than decorative merit. His first really fine piece of work was the "Orpheus," a splendid figure of the god, one hand raised to shade his eyes as he peers down the shadowy ways of Hades seeking to catch sight of his lost Eurydice, the other grasping his lyre, while Cerberus, already subdued, crouches at his side. The admirable balance of the whole young body as it stands poised for a plunge into the depths, the eager longing and stern resolve on the beautiful face, the hair and drapery blown back by the very winds of death—the whole is so true, so strong, yet so Greek in its purity and restraint, that it must always be considered as one of the finest pieces of modern art.

It cost my father many months of close work and self-denial; his funds were running alarmingly low, and he had resolved never to appeal to his family for money when once he had, as we should say now, learnt his trade. The all but breathing clay stood, day after day, in his studio, veiled in wet cloths; he had no money to put it into marble. Sightseers came—as they are always free to come—at studio hours, and many admired, but none proposed to acquire the statue. At last, one evening, the artist found that he had only that and two pauls (one franc) left in the world. He was very hungry, but it seemed to him a base thing to devote his last pennies



From a painting in the possession of the author

MRS. SAMUEL WARD

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to mere food. Since he was now convinced that he was destined to die of starvation, he would at least have one more hour of real happiness. So he spent the two pauls on a seat at the Opera, where he forgot all his own troubles and heartbreaks in listening to the divine strains of the *Trovatore*. Coming out of the theatre towards midnight, he pondered for a moment how best to cheat the night of the despair it was storing up for him, alone in the cold studio with the veiled thing that he had given his all to create, but which he must leave to crumble into dust above ground, as he, with all his youth and broken hopes, must crumble into dust below.

A glorious full moon was bathing Rome in a flood of radiance; the Tiber close by ran, a broad river of silver, twisting like a ribbon round the foot of Castel Sant' Angelo and breaking into milky spray against the massive piers of Bernini's bridge. My father turned from its too living beauty, and made his way to the other end of the town, where the marble way leads from the palace of the Cæsars to the Coliseum. Passing under the arches, feathered then with a mantle of ferns and flowers that never grew wild elsewhere, he came into the vast arena where so many thousands have died that every particle of the soil must have been saturated with human blood. But only silence and silver peace lay on the place then. Here he mused for hours, and at last, when the moon began to sink, went home, and threw himself down to sleep, too weary to even fear the morrow.

Well, the morrow broke bright and sunny, and the "postino" going on his first rounds, brought a letter to the studio door. It was in a strange hand and my father opened it eagerly.

Out fell a cheque. The letter contained an order for the "Orpheus," with a generous advance payment to defray initial expenses.

There was no more preparing for death after that. One order followed another, and before long the only danger was that in the joyful buoyancy of youth and success the artist would undertake more than he could carry out. But that doubt did not trouble him at all. Was there not the night as well as the day? He invented a queer little headpiece, a ring of metal like a crown, with a socket for a candle above the forehead. Fitting this on his head he would often work from dark to dawn, the light always resting on the spot sought by his eyes. Absolutely insensible to fatigue so long as he was interested, he overtaxed both eyesight and strength, and as it were set the doors open for the disease which carried him away almost before he had reached his prime.

My mother came of a very different stock. The Wards were English pure and simple. In the struggle between Charles I. and Parliament the head of the family took the Revolutionary side, fought under Cromwell, and fled to America at the time of the Restoration. His clumsy old sword was kept as a precious relic in the transplanted home. Once there, however, old principles prevailed, and the Wards were good British subjects in New York State for over a hundred years, more than one having been made Governor of Rhode Island. They acquired a good deal of property, managed to hold on to it during the Revolution, and afterwards rose to considerable prominence in New York City, owning in my grandfather's time the larger part of the tract which now represents one side of Fifth Avenue, as well as the rocky island called "Hellgate," bought and destroyed since by the

Government to remove a dangerous obstruction from the harbour. My grandfather, Samuel Ward, married Julia Rush, a Southern girl with much French blood in her veins and at least one good forefather of good Revolutionary fame, General Francis Marion, a relative of Charlotte Corday and a descendant of the great Corneille. My dear mother was exceedingly French in appearance, in a thousand little refinements of thought and conduct, and above all in the quality known among French people as "du cœur," a very different thing from what we call "heart." Her loves and friendships filled her life; she never neglected, never forgot. To be received into that high and sacred circle of hers was to become half-immortalized here. It meant that with all the seas between her enchanting letters would never fail, her exquisitely thought out little gifts and greetings would reach their destination at the appointed moment, year in, year out, after the separation of a lifetime. On a cold bitter day in a Northern clime the post would bring to some lonely soul a box of Roman violets or the golden "gagia"—the fluffy balls of caged sunshine which keeps its perfume for a decade. Each attractive book she read—and she was a great reader—would travel on to the one of her friends or children who would most enjoy it, to be discussed afterwards in the wonderful letters on which I, for one, lived, during the years that I was parted from her. She had the very genius of sympathy, and developed, as time went on, a delicately balanced critical sense which classed characters quite unerringly.

Her mother died when she was only two years old, leaving four sons and three daughters behind—a serious charge for my grandfather. He was a silent, rather stern parent as they knew him: the death of his young wife

had cast a gloom over his life which was never quite dispelled. Her he had worshipped with all his heart. On the occasion of their marriage he had been a little in doubt as to the proper fee to offer to the parson, and, with characteristic directness, asked him what it should be.

"Would you think a hundred dollars too much, Mr. Ward?" the reverend gentleman diffidently inquired.

"Sir," said Samuel Ward, "I should be ashamed to offer less than five hundred dollars to the man who had married me to such a wife!" So five hundred it had to be, though the good parson manifested some hesitation about accepting it.

The love of display was considered an unpardonable vulgarity in those days, and my grandfather sternly repressed any tendency towards it in his children. The little girls were provided with the most expensive underclothing, the finest linen and lace that money could buy, but the frock that covered it all had to be dark and plain. My mother said it nearly broke her little heart to have to go to a smart family wedding in bottle-green merino, with a petticoat like a ball-dress hidden away inside it! It was a wonder that she and her sisters ever grew up at all, for, whatever the temperature in the depth of a New York winter, a young lady could only wear silk stockings and the thinnest of little sandals, indoors or out, while all the dresses had low necks and short sleeves. My mother suffered from constant sore-throat, and told me that she would be running about for weeks at a time with a roll of flannel pinned round her neck and her poor little shoulders quite bare.

She and her sisters had nothing to complain of in the matter of education however. My grandfather distrusted

feminine methods, and procured for his daughters a learned tutor who taught them just what he would have taught to boys, Latin, mathematics, and to my Aunt Julia, who insisted upon it, Greek. The tutor, Mr. Cogswell, was still alive when my mother took me to America, and I was much impressed by his affection and admiration for her. I do not think she ever went into higher mathematics, but she found much recreation in working out problems of which I never could understand a single figure. I have often come out to speak to her at her breakfast (as a family we have all and always breakfasted alone), and found her with a slate in her hand, so immersed in some long calculation that I was ashamed to interrupt her.

While she was still almost a child a great financial crisis swept over the country, and several States of the Union decided to repudiate large loans obtained from England and then due. The New York Legislature, after much anxious discussion, came to the same decision; there was no money in the Treasury to meet the claim. My grandfather opposed the transaction with all his might, but the votes were against him. New York was bankrupt, and the debt could not be paid. Then he rose in his place and said: "Gentlemen, this disgrace shall not fall upon our State! I and my partner will give our last penny to save the honour of New York."

The firm was Ward and Prime, and Mr. Prime was of my grandfather's way of thinking. They were two of the richest men in the city. My uncle, Sam Ward, who was quite young at the time, said that for some days he watched the porters climbing the steps into the bank with bags of gold on their shoulders. Within a week the heads of the firm had converted their entire private

fortunes into bullion and shipped it to England. My grandfather's portrait certainly has a right to the place of honour it occupies in the New York Stock Exchange, and old men still raise their hats as they pass it.

He died when my mother was only sixteen, and the insane etiquette of the period plunged her and her sisters into something like widow's mourning for three whole years. A second death in the family threw a grave charge upon the family just then. My Uncle Sam had married Emily, the daughter of "old" Jacob Astor, the founder of the Astor fortune. He was a quaint old man, very keen, as fortune-founders have to be I suppose, about saving money. When my mother and aunts were staying in his house after Uncle Sam's marriage, he used to come and knock at all the bedroom doors before breakfast, calling out in his strong German accent, "How many eggs will you each haf, my dears?" Then he would go down and tell the cook the total, and woe to any capricious guest who left one uneaten and wasted after that!

Poor Emily died in giving birth to a little daughter, and the question arose as to who was to take care of the child. Other members of the family had planned a tour in Europe, but my dear mother, with characteristic unselfishness, renounced the pleasant journey, and remained at home to look after little Madeline. The latter in due time grew up and married Mr. Chanler of Washington fame, and became the mother of a very large family, dying herself when the twelfth was born. Her death was a blow to my mother, who loved her most dearly, and to whom Maddy's constant and faithful letters had always been a great pleasure.

My mother's first journey to Europe took place when

she was about eighteen. She crossed the Atlantic in a sailing vessel which took thirty days to make the transit, and told me that she enjoyed every moment of that leisurely voyage. She was fortunate in being a born sailor, never experiencing the slightest touch of either sea-sickness or timidity. I remember when she was quite elderly, and much crippled with rheumatism, that she loved to accompany my brother Marion in his wild sailings round the Bay of Naples. The rougher the weather the better she liked it. The rest of us used to shiver at seeing the two set forth, not even in a felucca, but in the *Margherita*, a little open boat that Marion particularly liked. My mother could not walk at the time, so she was carried down the long rocky stairway to the quay by the sailors and deposited, armchair and all, in the boat. The armchair was made fast between two thwarts, and then away they would go, mother and son, both perfectly happy, riding out over the breakers to make for open sea, returning after some hours (during which neither had spoken a word) drenched to the skin, but saying that they had had "an enchanting time."

My mother's first visit to Europe was made under the guidance and guardianship of my Aunt Julia and her husband, Doctor Howe. The youngest sister of the three, my Aunt Annie, was of the party, and the experience was a revelation of delight to the two girls. They made the usual "grand tour," finishing up with England, where Doctor Howe had many friends, so that his wife's pretty sisters saw all that was most attractive in English society. They were quite fresh and unspoiled; indeed their simple American ways amused their new acquaintances a good deal. My Aunt Annie, who was only

sixteen, could not get accustomed to the use of titles. On the first evening of her stay at Trentham, when the party dispersed at bedtime, she stood up, picked up her skirt carefully at precisely the right angle, and making her deep school-girl courtesy to the Duchess, said, "Good-night, Mrs. Sutherland. Thank you for a very pleasant evening."

It was in Rome that my father and mother met and became engaged to be married, much to the wrath of the Ward clan in New York, to whom the word "artist" suggested everything impecunious, unstable, suspicious. My mother and her sisters were regarded as heiresses in those sober days, and their uncle, John Ward, who had taken over the management of their affairs after their father's death, entirely refused his consent to the marriage. He was the most conscientious and faithful of trustees, but he had not my grandfather's clear intuition in business matters. Landed estate was to him an unattractive and uncertain asset; he did not agree with his brother, who, foreseeing the impending expansion of the city and the consequent rise in the value of property, had bought up whole districts in the desert north of Washington Square. His own first house had been at the Battery, just where the Standard Oil building now stands. My mother was born there, but he soon moved up town to the then unfashionable quarter of Bond Street, where the old "Ward Mansion" is pointed out to visitors to this day. Uncle John accompanied him in this migration, and built his own residence close to his brother's; but immediately after that brother's death he sold all the other landed property and placed his nephews' and nieces' fortunes in stocks—the only security which commended itself to his judgment.

Even so, a very goodly portion came to each, and Uncle John was fiercely adverse to letting the nieces be carried off by poor men. In his estimation such were, without exception, fortune-hunters. So the course of true love did not run smoothly for Thomas Crawford and Louisa Ward until the latter came of age. Then they were married, my father making it a condition that his wife's fortune should be entirely her own, and its management left in Uncle John's hands. He never touched a penny of it, having no need to do so, for his prosperity was quite assured before she became his wife.

The wedding took place in New York on November 2, 1843, and soon afterwards the young couple came to Rome, intending to remain only one year, during which time my father could complete certain important works. After that he proposed to remove his interests and belongings to New York, so that his wife might live among her own people and her own friends.

But Rome had taken them both to herself and never let them go. After each visit to the United States my mother returned more thankfully to the real home under the kinder Italian skies. There all the best years of her life had been passed; there love, and motherhood, and sorrow too, had found her; and there the little that is mortal of her is now laid to rest under the warm Roman sunshine, where the west wind she loved blows in from the Campagna and the sea, to sing overhead in the cypresses, and the roses already clamber high round the cross that marks the last, long-chosen point of her earthly pilgrimage.

CHAPTER II

ROME IN THE LATE FORTIES

My mother's early life in Rome—A false impression—Augusta Freeman—A gruesome tragedy and an Italian point of view—An incident at Santa Caterina di Siena—Gregory XVI. and the ballet-dancers—Swaddling the statues in St. Peter's—Secret societies—Mazzini—The origin of the Carbonari—The Conclave—Pius IX.—A difficult position—Revolution in the air—The murder of Count Rossi—The escape of Pio Nono—The Quirinal gardens—The secret of the grotto—My father and the Civic Guard.

MY mother did not find life very gay in Rome during the first two or three years of her marriage. Suddenly transplanted from a great circle of friends and relations in America, young and painfully shy, she made few friends outside the little ring of artists who were my father's contemporaries, and altogether repulsed the advances of the Roman ladies who, having known her during her first visit, would have been glad to receive her again. There lay the trouble—they expected her to come to their receptions and parties, and be content, as a very young and untitled woman, to have them leave cards in return for her own visits. But she, who had belonged to the funny, old-fashioned supremacy of New York, refused to admit that Roman princesses should treat her as a person of minor importance. Absolutely unworldly, quite untrained in the customs of foreign society, and having no one to guide her through that complicated labyrinth, she withdrew into herself, refused to bow to the great ladies who had left cards at her door (as

they had at those of most of their friends, for day visiting was little the fashion in the Rome of those times, most visits being paid on reception evenings), and earned for herself the reputation of a rather cantankerous and unmanageable foreigner who disliked the people among whom she had chosen to dwell.

American girls were strictly chaperoned in those prehistoric days, and before her marriage my mother had never been in the street alone, nor did she venture on that experience for some years afterwards. She was remarkably beautiful, and in Rome of all places it was necessary that she should have a staid-looking companion. My father had to devote most of his daylight hours to his work, but whenever it was possible he took her for long walks and drives, in the course of which she came to know the city and its history (the latter supplemented by avid reading) very thoroughly. Her love of languages furnished her with another interest, and gave her the exquisite conversational and epistolary Italian which it was always a joy to us in later years to draw forth. But until the nursery began to fill, her daily life depended for amusement and relaxation on one correspondence, that with her sister Annie—a correspondence so vast that no detail of the slightest interest seems to have been left out of it on either side—and one friendship, that of Augusta Freeman, the wife of a gifted but erratic painter who had been one of my father's earliest friends.

Dear Mrs. Freeman was such a familiar figure in my childhood's home that I can hardly recall my own early years without seeing her bright kind face or hearing the echo of all the quaint Neapolitan songs she used to sing as she twanged her old guitar, while Polly, her tyrannical green parrot, sat on her shoulder and chimed in with soft

little chuckles, interrupted when the fancy seized him to pull bits out of the gauze turban which had remained to her from the fashions of her youth and which she would never abandon. She was a Neapolitan of the Neapolitans, though her father, Doctor Latilla, had taken refuge in America after being mixed up in some of the revolutionary troubles with which the early years of the last century were so rife.

A seventh child of a seventh child, Augusta Freeman had the traditional gift of healing; whether it were a sick baby, a dog with a broken leg, or a beggar shaking with fever, she took the invalid into her tiny apartment if she could, in any case placed it in safety, and then nursed it back to health. She was an artist too, in a very charming way, modelling, to satisfy the maternal instinct which had not found its natural outlet, only children, enchanting "putti" rioting round bowls and vases which, cast in bronze or silver, were gladly bought by rich amateurs. Quite in her old age she completed a statuette of one of my boys, which was a charming little work of art. My last glimpse of her was just before her death, when a niece and nephew had persuaded her to come to England; she was still serene and full of fun and modelling away busily, but I am sure that the change from her own sunny Southern atmosphere shortened her life. She died almost immediately after hearing the news of the death of my mother, which unfortunately was imparted to her without sufficient preparation.

Our friend's maiden name recalls a gruesome tragedy which had fallen upon her people a generation or two before her time. The head of the Latillas died at his villa near Naples, I think, of cholera, in one of the first visitations of that scourge. It was at any rate some



From a miniature

MRS. THOMAS CRAWFORD

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alarmingly contagious disease which carried him off quite suddenly. His remains were hastily consigned to the family mausoleum where his ancestors reposed, far away at the most distant end of the large park. In South and Central Italy the horror of death is something of which Northerners have no conception. It has given rise to the mistaken belief that the dying are abandoned to the doctor and the priest as soon as their doom is pronounced. I believe that one or two such instances are stated as facts in the somewhat unreliable diaries of English travellers in Italy long ago. I can only say that in all my life no such case has come under my own eyes or those of any of my acquaintance. On the contrary, I have always seen the most assiduous tenderness shown to the dying; but when these have breathed their last all personal bonds are broken. I remember when some humble friends of mine had lost their father, for whom the sincerity of their grief was shown by long years of mourning and of devout and constant prayers for the repose of his soul, my desire to visit his grave was met by this reply: "Does the Signora really wish to do that? We will go to San Lorenzo and find out where it is."

This digression will explain how it came to pass that the Latilla mausoleum was carefully shunned by his family and servants for quite a year after the unfortunate Marchese had been carried thither. At the end of that time his widow, who had either been just married again or was preparing to do so, summoned the courage to go and have a look at it. Imagine her horror on beholding, behind the bars of the heavily grated windows, a ghastly almost-skeleton with fingers twisted, as in a last agony of despair, around the iron bars.

That she did marry and live on for some time afterwards, proves that her nerves were exceptionally strong or exceptionally callous. The story must have come under the notice of Marie Corelli in her early days, for it forms the groundwork of her book "Vendetta," completed by a superstructure of contradictions and impossibilities such as only the ardent and imaginative ignorance of youth would have dared to present as a picture of South Italian life.

As a refreshment after recalling the horrible story of the Latilla mausoleum, my mind returns to a lovely sight upon which my father and mother chanced in the course of one of their walks in Rome, I think about the year 1846. Mounting towards sunset the steps of the little church of Santa Caterina da Siena, just below the Aldobrandini garden (diminished now by the Via Nazionale), they entered, meaning to rest awhile before returning home. The church was quite empty, but at the far end of it, on the pavement before the high altar, lay an open coffin. All around was the stillness of death. Awed, they came and stood over the low coffin, and beheld an exquisitely fair young nun, her hands crossed on her breast and a smile of perfect peace on her face, while the last rays of the sun fell softly on her waxen beauty. Long my father knelt and gazed at her, and in after-years often spoke of the profound impression the sight had made upon him. By some accident the church doors had remained unlocked after the body had been brought in, to lie, as is customary, in the church, during its last night in the world of the living. When my father and mother stole away at dusk the church was still empty, the little nun still alone in her dreamless sleep.

That year, 1846, was marked by great events. During the summer Gregory XVI. died at the age of eighty-one, leaving a very troubled condition of affairs to be handled by whoever should be elected to succeed him. He was not a popular Pontiff, and the outspoken Romans indulged in various ribald jokes on the announcement of his demise. *Pasquino* displayed the next morning a drawing representing the deceased Pope as arriving confidently at heaven's gates, with what he supposed to be the Pontifical keys in his hand. St. Peter was looking out doubtfully and apparently shaking his head. The Pope then discovers that, in his haste, instead of the keys he has seized a flask of wine. He will have to go back and look for the keys!

Whether the accusation of a weakness for the "fiaschetta" were founded or no (and this popular tradition is unsupported by the testimony of his intimates), he was anxious to maintain a high level of public morals, and showed his zeal in that direction by ordaining that the dancing girls of the Opera should wear green Turkish trousers reaching to their ankles, whatever the rest of their costume might consist of. My mother used to say that the effect of a company of young women pirouetting gravely on one toe, with short tulle skirts flying straight out from their waists, while the rest of their limbs were swathed in floppy green silk, was one of the funniest things she had ever beheld. A more barbarous step in the interests of propriety was taken early in the ensuing reign, when Montalembert represented to the Pope that nude statues were out of place in St. Peter's, and persuaded him to have the splendid figures which ornament the tomb of Paul III. (executed by Guglielmo della Porta, under the supervision of Michelangelo) swaddled in

cast-tin draperies painted to match the colour of the marble.

Poor Pope Gregory had heavier anxieties than the morals of the Romans to carry to his grave. For many years past the Papal States had been seething with discontent, fanned to constant yet evanescent flames by the machinations of secret societies, which honeycombed the dominions from end to end. These were directed chiefly by Giuseppe Mazzini, from London, where countless plots were being hatched against the badly shaken peace of Southern Europe. At the moment of the Pope's death the papal prisons were full to overflowing with political undesirables, whom the Pontiff had considered it unwise to send into an exile where they could only increase the ever-swelling numbers of active malcontents and conspirators who had given serious trouble so early as 1831, the year of his accession. It was in that outbreak that the "Carbonari," after disappearing from public ken for some hundreds of years, gained an unenviable notoriety, to which sinister lustre was added by Fieschi's attempt, in July, 1835, on the life of Louis Philippe—"the first of eight plots against his life which had not been discovered before the accomplishment of this one."

I have so often been asked to explain the connection between charcoal-burners and revolutionaries, that it may not be amiss to recall the origin of the too-well-known name. Some time during the eleventh century, when the long struggle between Guelph and Ghibelline had just begun, the Guelphs, proscribed and hunted by the powerful machinery of the Emperors, were only able to meet in the depths of the forests, where a charcoal-burner's hut was usually utilized as a shelter for their discussions.

Hence the name of the dreaded society, which, founded by the most loyal partisans of the Papacy to defend the Temporal Power, was revived, eight centuries later, to overthrow not only the Temporal Power of the Popes, but a score of other thrones as well, succeeding at last in imposing the acceptance of its democratic principles as the only condition on which, in our own days, sovereigns can retain power at all.

Great anxiety prevailed in Rome when the Conclave sat debating as to who should succeed the sixteenth Gregory. But the discussion was a very brief one. The Prelates went into Conclave on Sunday, the 14th of June, and on the morning of Tuesday, the 16th, my father and mother, waiting in the vast concourse assembled outside the building where the consultation was taking place, beheld, ascending from its chimney, the thin spiral of smoke which denoted that the die was cast and the votes were being burnt. Intense excitement was felt until the Dean of the Sacred College came out on the balcony to announce the name of the new Pope. When he appeared, and, in the ancient formula, declared "Magnum Gaudium amnuntio vobis," the name with which it closed was hailed with general delight. What he did not tell them was that it belonged to the very Cardinal deputed to count the votes, and that he, on realizing their meaning, "was so terrified at the burden about to be imposed on him that he faltered for a moment, and cried, 'My brothers, have pity on me, have pity on me! I am not worthy!' However, when the time came for the Cardinal Sub-Dean to put the question, 'Dost thou accept the election which has been made of thee to the office of Sovereign Pontiff?' Cardinal Ferretti replied that he was ready to conform to the

will of God, and would take the name of Pius IX." A comparatively young man, Giovanni Mastai-Ferretti was already beloved for his genial disposition and his earnest charity. As Bishop of Imola he had sold all his plate to relieve the necessities of the poor, and no one in distress ever appealed to him in vain. But mere practical Christianity would have done little to render him popular with the aspiring politicians of Italy had it not been generally known that he had widely liberal views on public matters. This must have been the result of thought and conviction, for, the son of an old noble and very pious family in Sinigaglia, he had been brought up in a strictly conservative circle. As a young man he had served in the Noble Guard, and was, they say, unusually good-looking. Tall and well built, with fine features and brilliant dark eyes, he must have presented a splendid appearance in the gorgeous uniform. While he was wearing it he lost his heart to and captured the affections of a beautiful English girl, whose parents, however, objected to the match, on the grounds of religion.

Religion claimed him a little later, but he brought with him into her service an independence of thought and sympathy with progressive ideas which he had acquired during his sojourn in the lay world. His first official act after being installed as Pontiff was to publish an edict of universal amnesty for all political prisoners in the Papal States. Hundreds of men who were serving life sentences were set at liberty, a benefit which some, like Giuseppe Galetti, the son of a barber in Bologna, acknowledged with exuberant gratitude and repaid by becoming the foremost to drive the Holy Father out of Rome a short time afterwards.

Like so many other enthusiastic reformers, Pius IX. found that he had underrated the strength and mistaken the quality of the forces which he had let loose. The story of the first three years of his reign is the story of disillusion complete and final. An ardent patriot, and desiring with all his heart the liberation of Italy from Austrian rule, he yet knew that to declare war upon Austria at that time would be fatal to Italian independence, would rivet the alien bonds more firmly than ever, since Italy in her weakness and dissension was in no condition to cope with a strong and settled power. It is an ungrateful task to charge the memory of such a man as Pius IX. with vacillation, but his policy at this crisis cannot be otherwise described. Unwilling to refuse the eager demands of his people that he would join the Piedmontese in their efforts to expel the Austrians, he sent his troops to the North, but immediately afterwards attempted to avert disaster by forbidding them to do more than defend his own frontier. They recklessly disobeyed his command—as perhaps he should have foreseen—but when Durando, their leader, brought them back to Rome, routed and broken, no punishment was inflicted upon him for his flagrant insubordination.

The Pope's promise of granting a constitution was made in the honest belief that the people had a right to possess one ; but when it came to framing the plan for representative government it was found to be practically impossible to combine that method with the authority of the Head of the Church in the religious centre of the world. Pius IX. would not abandon the idea, and hoped, I fancy, that it would allay the excitement caused by his forced withdrawal of support to the cause of Italian independence. The sincerity of his intentions was manifested

by his choice of Count Pelegrino Rossi, a man of the highest character and education, combined with well-known liberal convictions, to be the President of the Chambers, a post which Pius IX. decreed should be united with that of the Head of the Ministry.

But revolution was in the air. The Papal States were torn with factions; disorder, fermented by the emissaries of Mazzini and Cavour, reigned everywhere; Rome itself was crowded with violent radicals who aimed at destroying all authority and proclaiming a universal republic. "War with Austria" was their party cry, and they counted a number of adherents, not only among newly elected deputies, but in the Ministry itself. Count Rossi's quiet but firm repression of disorder, his project of peacefully forming a united Italy by bringing about a national confederation of States which would be strong enough to dictate terms to Austria, a project which he had already begun to put into execution,—all this did not appeal to the passions of the revolutionaries, and they decided that the Prime Minister should be removed. The promise of constitutional government was to become a reality with the opening of the Chambers on November 15, 1848, and that was the day selected for Count Rossi's murder. He knew of his danger, forbade his two sons to accompany him, and went to meet his fate with the utmost serenity. The sixty conspirators were waiting round the entrance of the Palazzo della Cancelleria. As Rossi descended from his carriage a man advanced towards him and touched him with a stick on the shoulder. Rossi turned to look at him, and was instantly stabbed in the neck. He fell without a cry, rose resolutely, "put a handkerchief over the wound, and, smiling at his servant, ascended mechanically the first

steps of the staircase, which were bathed with blood. Then he fell, never to rise again."[1]

The crime horrified the Romans. When my mother drove past the Cancelleria the next morning, they were standing in crowds round the steps (still red with that true, brave blood) bewailing the loss of the best friend the country had. But the revolutionists were in the ascendant, and reiterated their demands with threatening persistence. The Pope, dismayed at the storm his progressive measures had let loose, resisted. A priest who ventured to defend him was murdered, and a few days later Pius IX., who was then living at the Quirinal Palace, was besieged by the mob. The windows were fired at, and one of his attendants, Monsignor Palma, was shot dead in the room next to him. With the city in the hands of the murderous insurgents, and a sack of his own residence imminent, the time had come for flight, and Pius IX., assisted by Count Spauor, the Bavarian Ambassador, made his escape from Rome on the night of November 24.

When I was a child we had a standing permission to play in the Quirinal gardens, and every step of the way the Pope must have taken to leave the palace was familiar to me. The pile itself stands on something like a precipice on the hill whence it looks down on the city, a precipice masked by a huge mass of masonry utilized to provide stables as well as to house the guards on duty. From the foot of this great wall a street, of steps so wide and shallow as to be scarcely perceptible, leads up to the imposing front entrance on the Piazza del Quirinale,

[1] "Italy," J. Higginson Cabot, Ph.D., in the series "The History of Nations." The writer gives an excellent account of this disturbed period, but falls into many errors in the relation of subsequent events.

while the palace itself and then the high walls of the gardens run back on level ground the whole way to the Piazza di Termini, where my own home was situated. The gardens were very old; there were box walls six feet thick and thirty feet high; an entire theatre, proscenium, wings, and auditorium, all grown in box; endless avenues and fountains and statues; and, what delighted me most in those days, at the end of the great terrace from where one could see all Rome, an enormous hall built to imitate a grotto, fringed with stalactites and moist with the spray of many fountains, where marble nymphs crawled under wreaths of maidenhair fern. The grotto had a marvellous secret, known only to us and the wizened little old man who was the gardens' chief guardian. If I had been very good he would lead me to the entrance and leave me there, forbidding me to come a step farther; disappearing into the dusky depths, he would turn a key. Then from far, far away the softest, strangest old music came welling forth, filling the dark dome with sounds of unearthly sweetness, and at the same time from the mosaic pavement a thousand jets of water sprang into the air, crossing each other in perfect geometrical curves high overhead, catching the light from the sunny terrace in their magic arcs, till the whole space was a veil of weaving diamonds, through which I could only dimly see the shadowy greenness of the fern-clothed walls, the dim white of the naiads' statues all gleaming under their fairy bath.

When the music died away and the jewelled sprays had sunk back into the ground, I used to feel bitterly sad. Life had nothing more for me that day.

We often lost ourselves in the endless labyrinths of the deep alleyed gardens, though I fancy we knew them

better than Pius IX. when he stole down on that November evening, feeling, I am sure, very uncomfortable in his decorous disguise of a private gentleman, to find his way to the one postern door far up the street through which he might pass unobserved. It was the same door by which we always entered, very small and very low, so distant from the regular entrances that it had escaped the attention of the besiegers and their cannon; so unnoticeable that Count Spauor's travelling carriage could wait near by safely until the Sovereign, accompanied by one servant, slipped out and jumped into it with what must have been a sigh of very heartfelt relief. There was still the city gate to pass, but even the Civic Guard, now in charge as the troops of the revolutionaries, did not venture to interfere with a foreign Ambassador, whatever whim might be carrying him along the Via Appia at that time of night. The Ambassador's coachman drove fast and furiously, and the Pope was safe in Gaeta among friends before his flight was discovered.

I am sorry to say that my dear parents—as perhaps was natural for born Americans—had distinctly republican tendencies, and I was brought up to think it quite an heroic act in my father to join the Civic Guard a little later, when Europe had undertaken to reinstate the Pontiff on his throne, and General Oudinot was besieging Rome with that object. A big sword, a brass helmet, and a beautiful crimson sash, the souvenirs of his short service, had a cherished place among our playthings; and when our mother used to tell us of her terrible anxiety when "Papa" was helping to defend the city walls, my heart beat fiercely in unison with all things free and republican. When I became acquainted later in life with the record of the same body of braves, who committed numberless

excesses, I was a little less proud of the connection, although I knew that my father had nothing to do with their lawless outbreaks. I fancy he learnt much in those months, for to him, as to all other right-thinking persons, it was a great relief when the siege and republic and "Junta" tension were over, when the Pope had come into his own again, and the pretty French officers, with their amazing uniforms and gay faces, were making the old city once more safe—and amusing.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY, PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE

The Villa Negroni—A disappointing event—My sister Annie—"Friends from China"—"Moro"—A little absent-mindedness—An unrehearsed effect—An adventure in Tuscany—Munich—"Bavaria"—King Louis I.—The story of Lola Montez—A title and a revolution—Lola's next appearance.

MY father took the Villa Negroni a year or two before I was born. Two little girls, my sisters Annie and Jennie—one six years old, the other three and a half—were playing in the big blue nursery when I made my appearance on the 8th April, 1851. Both my parents naturally desired a boy, and my aunt, Julia Ward Howe, who was paying them a visit at the time, came into my mother's room backwards when the disappointing event was announced to her, exclaiming, "Louisa Crawford, I am ashamed of you!" But my dear father and mother forgave me my mistake, and took me to their hearts quite as tenderly as if I had fulfilled all their wishes.

For something over three years I reigned supreme in the house, only disapproved of by my sister Annie, who was a weird, contradictory little creature, very difficult to manage even at that early age. She had the greatest dislike to authority, and, when she was about four years old, invented a plan by which she could obey orders, when they suited her, without renouncing her independence. She declared that she had friends from China staying with her, that they would always remain invisible to the rest

of the family, but that she was obliged to consult them about all her actions. A charming governess had been engaged for her, as she was not a child to be left with the easy-going Italian servants; but whether it were Miss Watson or any one else who told her to do something, she always retired to consult her Chinese friends before complying. As she was a very delicate little thing, physical coercion was out of the question, and she was so portentously self-willed that neither mother nor governess could drive her except in the direction of her choice. My father made it a principle to leave the entire management of the children to his wife, and during the few years that he was spared to us not one of us could remember a word of reproof or a stern look from him. Of course we adored him, and when he would break in our play (always at unforeseen moments, just as the fancy took him), looking so big and handsome and laughing his ringing, boyish laugh, we went wild with happiness. He devoted himself particularly to me; there is somewhere still in existence a box in which is an infinitesimal slipper with an inscription in his big handwriting: "May's first shoe," together with the flowers which he gathered for my christening so many years ago. I am thankful for the unusual precocity of my memory, which clearly recalls his teaching me to walk—an accomplishment which I had attained when I was a year old.

He used to carry me down to the orange *viale*, set me on my feet, and then pull oranges off the trees and roll them down the avenue to induce me to run after them. The oranges looked as big as pumpkins to me, and I got many tumbles in chasing them, and continuously lost the blue shoes; but he used to pick them up gravely and put them on again, and when I was quite breathless would lift



From a painting by Healy

THOMAS CRAWFORD

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me to his shoulder and let me throw the oranges for the little floss-silk spaniel, our other playmate, to run after instead. Behind us usually stalked "Moro," a black cat of enormous size and corresponding dignity, who so loved my father that when the hour approached for him to leave the studio and return to his home, Moro would glide down the long stone stairs and sit by the *porte cochère* waiting for him, and would never touch food if the master were absent. At meals he perched on the back of my father's chair, motionless as a cat of basalt, until some morsel which struck him as appetizing was being raised on the fork. Then an unerring black paw shot out, lifted it delicately off, and carried it to his own mouth so silently that my father himself, always talking interestedly, would not notice the theft until his teeth encountered the naked metal, when of course we children would go off into ecstasies of laughter.

Papa's little absent-mindednesses were a constant joy to us, and our delight knew no bounds when, one evening, being enchanted with a particularly sweet rose and intending to blow out a candle, he puffed vigorously at the flower and smelt the flame so enthusiastically that his beautiful nose showed marks of the contact for some days afterwards. Though after I was five years old I only saw him once for a very short time, his personality was so distinct in my mind that to this day I cannot see a pair of blazing blue eyes under a broad white forehead without recalling his beloved face, cannot touch very fine batiste, such as he always used for his handkerchiefs, or smell a particular brand of Havana cigar, without thinking of him.

He was a wonderful mimic, and took pleasure in reckless *tours de force* which amounted to genius. One

evening, at a public dinner of artists and literary men, there was some heated discussion about classical languages, which was followed by a call for a speech in Greek. My father knew nothing of Greek, but had, at some time or other, taken pleasure in hearing it read for the sake of its noble sound. Instantly he sprang to his feet, and spoke for some twenty minutes with such fluency, fire, and fidelity to sound and pronunciation that no one dreamed the words were made up as he went along. Those present who had some knowledge of the ancient tongue imagined that he was giving them either a very modern or else a remotely archaic dialect; the sentences had been poured forth so rapidly that they thought it was their own fault if they had not understood them. Before he had become acquainted with German he had amused himself by performing the same feat in that language, to the woeful perplexity of some Germans present. My brother Marion inherited his faultless ear, but added to it such an extensive knowledge that, of the twenty or more languages with which he was familiar, he spoke several so as to be taken for a native of the country in which he happened to be travelling.

My father's love of things German began in Thorwaldsen's studio, where he and Schwanthaler were pupils together and formed a lasting friendship. I think it was Schwanthaler who persuaded him to desert marble for bronze, a material in which he himself preferred to see his work produced. His colossal statue of "Bavaria" had been erected in Munich, when after his death my father, having modelled the Washington monument, found it necessary to visit that city to make arrangements for the casting. As Rome was uninhabitable during the summer, we were always taken away

for three or four months. The year before we had travelled in Switzerland, and had spent some time at Zurich; but all I remember of that episode is some very big white mountains, and the fact that, whereas till then I had been called "Mimi" (my father allowed no one but himself to use the pet name of "May"), the Swiss maids changed it to "Mimli"; this on our return to Italy became "Mimoli," and is the only name I have answered to ever since.

A journey from Rome to Munich was a serious matter of about three weeks' duration when I made my first trip to that place. An enormous travelling carriage accommodated my parents, three restless little girls, the governess, the maid, my nurse, and the courier, besides all the properties it was necessary to take with us. The whole expedition was an excursion into fairyland for me; and often, in recent years, when whirling round the earth on transcontinental trains, I have thought with longing regret of the leisurely progress through beautiful countries, of the stopping to pick flowers, of the comfortable, picturesque inns, of the stories and games with which our kindly elders beguiled the days. But the method had occasional drawbacks. I think it was on the return journey from Munich that my father's charitable instincts placed the family in a very awkward predicament. We were already in Italy, and had put up for the night at a posting inn in some small town in Tuscany. While the women and children of the party were preparing to go to bed, my father amused himself by watching three men who were playing cards in the public room. He soon realized that two of them were cheating flagrantly to fleece the third. After waiting long enough to take in the intricacies of the game, he told the victim to give

up his hand to him—he would win his money back for him. Only too gladly did the man consent, and my father took his place.

For a time all went gaily enough; but as soon as the two sharpers perceived that he was sufficiently sure of himself to be a little careless, they began to rob him as cleverly as they had robbed the first man. My father's venturesome blood was up; he would not acknowledge himself defeated; roll after roll of louis crossed the table; and at last he found that he had lost every penny he was carrying. In wild dismay he rushed up to my mother to tell her what he had done. Poor Mamma, awakened out of her first sleep by this announcement of bankruptcy, had to evolve a plan of rescue. No one must suspect the facts, so she arranged to be taken ill towards five in the morning, when Papa, in great anxiety about her, would borrow a horse and ride to the nearest big town to consult a physician, and if necessary bring him back. The project was carried out: my father, recommending his wife to the innkeeper's most watchful care, dashed away in the dawn, and rode hard all day. He returned two days later; the doctor had been found in the person of the American consul, and his prescription had been made up by the nearest banker. Mrs. Crawford had already recovered sufficiently to laugh at the adventure; and the only result of her illness was that from that day forth she took charge of the travelling funds herself.

My father had visited Munich once or twice before he took us all there, and had been enthusiastically received by Schwanthaler, Voigt, and his brother-artists. He was made a member of the "Künstler" corps, and greatly enjoyed their jovial hospitality. A memento of

their prodigious "Kneipe" used to stand on his writing-table, a siver-lined bronze drinking-cup which exactly reproduced the last joint of the little finger of Schwanthaler's colossal statue, the "Bavaria." It was some fourteen inches high, and must have required quite a gallon and a half of the famous "Münchener Brau" to fill it. Papa was usually a rather abstemious man; but I believe that he successfully passed the test of initiation into the artists' club by emptying this Viking goblet at a draught.

The one vivid impression which remained to me of that summer was the strange experience of being carried up the winding stair which led to a chamber in the head of the gigantic figure. I fancy there was a further exit above, for I distinctly remember Mr. Voigt holding me in his arms, and pausing three steps above where my two sisters were sitting on red-velvet seats, looking out through the low oblong windows cut in Bavaria's eyes! Voigt said something to some one behind us on the stairs, and began to gently sway his body backwards and forwards. Instantly the whole towering figure responded to his movement, and rocked in unison. Some trick of the foundations provided for this delicate elasticity. I clung to his neck in terror—somebody screamed—and he laughed, such a deep, joyous laugh, at the fright he had given us. Then came a long, dark descent, still in those strong arms, and I remember no more.

During one of his former sojourns in the home of modern German art, my father had become a great favourite with King Louis I., the son of old Maximilian, the stoutest monarch in Europe and the last to wear earrings. King Louis reigned from 1825 to 1848, and while priding himself on being a poet, a sculptor, and a virtuoso of all the fine arts, left, as a ruler, much to be

desired. With the money wrung from his subjects, he attempted to found a new Athens on the Iser, and to renew the glories of Pericles; but those same subjects, even within a few miles of his capital, were living in a condition of the deepest ignorance and illiteracy. As for morals, he had none, and seemed to triumph in publishing the fact; but he must have had a very charming and magnetic personality, which made it easy—as, after all, it usually is for Royalty—to persuade those near him to condone his exceedingly flagrant lapses from virtue.

The most glaring of these, however, brought about his fall. A lovely Spanish woman, Lola Montez, originally a street singer and dancer, had, after a variety of adventures, made her way to Germany. Her first triumph came to her in Berlin, where she captured the heart of the noble and puissant Prince, Henry the 72nd of Reuss-Lobenstein-Ebersdorf, ruler of dominions just six miles square in extent.[1] But Lola was not satisfied with the potentate's affections; she wanted to try her pretty hand at governing, and attempted to ease him of the cares of sovereignty by taking them upon herself. The Royal sensibilities were alarmed; the throne was really not big enough for two. So Henry the 72nd looked around for another home for his inconvenient enchantress. With fine perspicacity he decided on Munich, gave her 2,000 thalers for journey money, and sent her off thither by way of Heidelberg. The young woman seems to have accepted his views with fair resigna-

[1] In the three remaining branches of the Reuss family only one name, Henry, is ever given to the sons. The numeration of the dynasty does not pass from father to son, but begins anew for each line with each century. "Henry" is the first, or the hundredth, according to the number of male relatives who have or have not preceded his entrance into the world since his century began.

tion; King Louis I. was just the man to be captivated by her rare beauty, and, as a protector, would be much more satisfactory than her recent one. She stayed long enough in Heidelberg to restore her drooping spirits by various unreportable adventures among the students, and then went on to Munich to besiege the affections of the poetic King. Her journey was entirely successful, and resulted in one of the greatest scandals of the century, bringing about, as it did, the Bavarian Revolution which cost King Louis his throne.

Lola's domination over the monarch was complete and unsparing, and gave the deepest offence to the devoutly Catholic Bavarians. When Louis announced his intention of bestowing upon her the title of Countess Landsfelt, his Minister, Von Abel, a religious man, refused his confirmation of the patent, and resigned rather than affix it. The Bavarians applauded his courage, but the King, in his blind infatuation, laughed at his scruples, and declared that with his retirement the "Jesuit Régime" was over in Bavaria. Von Abel's place was filled by one Von Mauer, a man who, a short while previously, had, at a sitting of the Council, protested against a grant of money to Lola as "the greatest calamity that could have befallen Bavaria." These righteous sentiments were not proof against the temptation of promotion and Royal favour. He instantly countersigned the patent for the dancer's ennoblement, but seems to have been unprepared for the next step imposed by Louis upon him and his colleagues in the new Ministry. This was the command to proceed forcibly against the Jesuits who conducted the high school of Munich, and whose character and teachings furnished a living protest against the King's disregard of public decency. The monarch's instructions

were so far carried out that one of the best-loved of the Jesuit professors was retired with great indignity. The students, furiously incensed, assembled before his house on March 1, 1848, to give him an ovation of cheering and to denounce Lola, and such a riot ensued that the troops had to be called out to quell it.

The effect of their intervention was but temporary; one disturbance followed another until at length the University was closed. This was too much for the good citizens, who made common cause with the students and united with them in a riotous demonstration against Lola, whose shamelessness had by this time overstepped all bounds. But her day was over; she was obliged to fly from Munich. Unfortunately her departure came too late to appease the fury which the King's cynical conduct had aroused. The news which just then arrived from Paris gave the reformers courage and hope; their murmurings were now openly and personally directed against Louis, who attempted to soothe them with high-sounding fatherly proclamations. Then it became known that the obnoxious Spanish woman had only removed to a refuge a short distance away, whence she nightly visited her Royal friend. At this revelation a storm of public indignation broke forth, and the people clamoured unanimously for the Sovereign's abdication. Louis recognized the impossibility of further resistance, and on March 20, three weeks after the expulsion of the Jesuit teacher from his post, abdicated in favour of his son, Maximilian, the cousin on their mother's side of the Empress of Austria and the Queen of Naples. Louis had repeatedly said, "My kingdom for Lola!" and he was made to keep his word.

Lola Montez wisely disappeared for a time, and her next apparition was a sufficiently surprising one.

I fancy my dear father must have seen her in his first visit to Munich, and, seeing her outer loveliness, had, like a true artist, remembered only that and forgotten her moral disqualifications. However that may be, when we found ourselves in America, some eight or nine years after her downfall, her name came to my sharp little ears in tones of commiseration, falling from the lips of two of the most exquisitely virtuous Christians in the world—my mother and my aunt Annie Maillard. A little later my nurse, a Wesleyan Methodist, who ruled me with a rod of iron, and daily convinced me that I was doomed to eternal fire unless some miracle occurred to change the black wickedness of my heart, gave me, as profitable reading for my six-year-old mind, a thick little tract, describing the conversion of one Lola Montez, a sweet, warm-hearted creature who had been somehow mysteriously wronged in the past, and who, out of humility, declared that she had been a great sinner—as of course all were who had lived in non-Wesleyan darkness—but who was now a shining light in a community where every member was so sure of heaven that all relations with the Deity consisted in allaying his impatience for their arrival by assuring him that they were coming along just as fast as proper considerations of convenience and comfort would permit.

I think the instructive tale ended by the picture of the new saint's death-bed, where she exhorted her weeping admirers to resignation at her loss. My stern-faced, hard-handed nurse fed me on death-beds—all the stories of angelic little children ended with one—and it was not till many years later that I realized that poor Lola's penitence for sin was not an altogether superfluous exercise of humility.

CHAPTER IV

GHOST STORIES AND EARLY REMINISCENCES

Frederick Augustus of Saxony—His Queen—An epidemic and the Black Lady—A ghostly guardian of Teutonic Royalty—The White Lady—What the sentry saw—The fulfilment of the vision's prophecy—The White Lady and Frau von G.—Malarial fever and the Spaniard's mysterious cure—Del Nero—My first opera—The Bagni di Lucca—The Grand Duchess of Tuscany and her *Gentil 'uomo d'onore*—"Celso"—Birth of my brother Marion—The Cardinal and the Nonconformist nurse—Marion's temper—I discover the land of books.

THE mention of Louis of Bavaria has reminded me of some curious circumstances connected with the death of his brother-in-law. It is the story of the ghost provided for by State regulations in the most practical of modern kingdoms, and I will write it down before the sun rises over the hills and banishes it from my mind.

Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony, the husband of Marie, daughter of Max Josef of Bavaria, died on August 9, 1854, in the midst of an epidemic that ravaged the country (as it was ravaging various others) and spread consternation in the bright little city of Dresden. All who could do so departed hastily at the approach of the scourge, and the entire Royal family, with the exception of the King himself, fled to the castle of Pillnitz, having extracted a promise from the Sovereign that he would follow them thither as soon as affairs of State should permit.

On the evening of their arrival at their destination, the Queen was sitting in the salon after dinner with her three ladies, one of whom was reading aloud. Suddenly the reader's voice died away, and she stood transfixed, her eyes dilated as if staring at some terrible sight.

"What is the matter?—are you ill?" cried the Queen, whose nerves, like those of her companions, were already strung to the highest pitch of excitement and apprehension by terror of the disease.

The lady-in-waiting, regaining her self-control, managed to falter out an excuse for her strange behaviour; but it was so manifestly inadequate that the Queen would not accept it. At last, under pressure of her questions, the still trembling woman described what had occurred. As she was reading she had happened to look up from her page, and, to her amazement, saw that where there had been but four people present, including herself, there was now a fifth, slowly crossing the room behind the Queen. The new-comer was a tall woman, whose face she could not see, but whose costume instantly attracted her attention on account of its sinister uniformity with the circumstances of those weeks. The figure was dressed in full Court mourning; a heavy veil concealed its head and face; it wore long black gloves and the regulation black fan.

The ladies were all terrified, and the poor Queen was completely overcome. Too often in the history of her family had the fatal presage of such visits been fulfilled.[1]

"It is the Black Lady you have seen!" she moaned. "It is for me that she has come—I feel sure of it!"

She passed the next few hours in agitation which her attendants strove in vain to allay. But the call was not

[1] See Note p. 624. The "Weisse Frau."

for her. The next day brought a messenger from Dresden with the terrible news that the King had died in the night.

Another such fearfully impressive warning bestowed by the shadowy guardian of Teutonic royalty—this time under her other and more usual guise of the "White Lady"—was still much talked of, when my husband, then a very young man, was attached to the British Legation in Dresden. In the month of July 1857 Frederick William IV. of Prussia and his Queen had stopped, on their way from a "cure" at Marienbad, to visit the King and Queen of Saxony, and were staying in the Royal Palace at Pillnitz.

It was a strangely still night; the moon was shining brightly overhead, but a thick fog, rising several feet from the ground, hung round the palace. Towards one o'clock in the morning, through the dead silence around him, the sentry on guard at the entrance was suddenly aware of the distant sound of footsteps, regular and heavy, as of soldiers marching towards him out of the moonlit haze across the gravelled space in front of his sentry-box. Presently he began to distinguish the outlines of a company of some kind advancing ever, at the same slow, even pace. Then, to his horror, it resolved itself into five figures: a woman in white, followed by four men carrying a long, heavy object on their shoulders—carrying it very easily, for all four were headless!

Dumb and frozen with terror, the sentry was unable to articulate a challenge as the Weisse Frau and her ghastly companions passed by him. Without a pause, they entered a smaller side door of the palace and disappeared.

For a few minutes he stood distracted by doubts as to



From a miniature by Krantz, 1858

HUGH FRASER

how to act. Ought he to give the alarm? Had he gone mad? Was he awake or dreaming? Before he could determine these questions, however, the postern door was pushed open, and from it issued the same incredible procession of five figures, the headless men with their burden this time preceding the White Lady, who followed a few feet in rear of them. They passed quite close to the sentry, who saw that what they carried was an open coffin, and that it contained the body of a man dressed in a General's uniform sparkling with orders and decorations, amongst which he recognized that of the Black Eagle. But where the head of the body should have been, there was nothing but a royal crown which filled the space between the shoulders. The body was headless even as were those of its phantom bearers.

The sentry's knees knocked together, but, to his everlasting credit, he remained at his post, and mustered sufficient self-control to note every detail of the terrifying vision. Slowly the four bearers moved away into the night, followed by the White Lady, and the man when he made his official report said that he "saw the figures gradually disappear from the feet up. The fog rose and hid first the lower parts of the men carrying the coffin, while the moonlight still glinted on the crown within it. The woman's figure followed them and disappeared the last of all."

What the vision foretold was not long left in doubt. Frederick William IV. had been unwell for some time past, and during this visit the first certain signs of the malady which was to deprive him of his reason showed themselves. About three months later, on the 8th of October, he was struck down with a brain seizure; and although every effort was made to minimize the gravity

of the case, his condition was such that on the 27th of the same month the Prince of Prussia, known to us as the Emperor Frederick William the First, was reluctantly forced to assume the Regency.

For three years the King lingered, with occasional intervals of reason, until even these stray flashes died down into an unvaried darkness. Death put a merciful end to his sufferings on January 2, 1861.

Only one story of the Weisse Frau ever moved me to laughter—an injury which it is said she bitterly resents. Somewhere in the late 'seventies my sister Annie, living in the wilds of Prussian Poland, went to see a dear friend, Frau von G——, who had just come through a terrible siege of illness in the family. The G——'s home was as lonely as Annie's—a grim old castle of nameless age and harrowing inconvenience, subject moreover to visits from the famous White Lady. Frau von G—— related to my sister that while the children were dangerously ill with scarlet fever, the master of the house, in an equally critical condition with pneumonia, had, in order to lessen the danger of contagion for him, been placed as far away from the little ones as possible. In order to go from them to him she was obliged to pass through the enormous central hall which divided one wing of the castle from the other. Late one night, torn with anxiety about her many invalids, she was rushing through this hall to carry something to her husband, when her progress was suddenly barred by the White Lady, who stood directly in her path, in a menacing attitude.

At any other time she would probably have fainted with fright, but at that moment a fury of anger took possession of her. After all she had gone through, such a horrid intrusion was more than she could bear.

"*Auch dass!*" (This too!) she cried indignantly—and without deigning to even turn aside, walked straight through the spectre.

Her invalids recovered, and the Weisse Frau must have understood the situation, for as far as I know Frau von G—— was never made to suffer for her temerity.

Trève aux revenants! They have carried me too far from the tracks of my record, and I must retrace my steps and pick up the few clear milestones which mark the early years, dear to me because of a presence all too soon withdrawn. When I was born my father had achieved many of his ambitions; life smiled on him—and so it smiled on me. Day followed bright day in the old palace; I cannot remember a sad one even when, in the winter or spring after our return from Munich, I was fastened upon by a now obsolete form of malarial fever known as a "double tertian." The orthodox tertian chills and burns only every other day; this scourge had a double lash, each freezing and scorching on its own days and hours. So I wasted away in my little cot, always covered with pretty playthings, and got so weak that I liked better to lie and look through the wide windows of my mother's room over to the Sabines, whose jewel colouring still delighted me. Doctor Pantaleone—long years afterwards a pillar of progressism in the Parliament that is supposed to represent that impossible thing, a united Italy—came and gave me much quinine, and was greatly displeased to find that my stubborn malady would not yield to it. My mother was worn to a shadow with nursing me; my father distracted with anxiety, for I was slipping away before his eyes. Then a queer Spanish artist who loved him much said:

"Amigo, I can cure your little girl! But you must

not ask me what the cure is, for I am under oath not to reveal it."

And he went home and prepared his medicine, and came back, and my father brought him to my bedside. Then he undid a package and took out two broad bracelets of softest white leather, and wrapped one round each of my wrists. In a few moments they had stuck there as close as the skin they covered.

"Do not touch them," said this mysterious friend; "when they have sucked away the fever they will fall off."

In a very little while they did uncurl and fall off, and I was quite cured. Moreover, from that day to this, although I have had to brave climates and conditions where malaria was rampant, no touch of it ever caught me again. The Spanish artist died, and his secret with him. But I got well and had a very happy time that year, enjoying particularly the attentions of two middle-aged gentlemen who united to spoil me very delightfully. One was my godfather, Mr. Hooker, such a well-known figure in Rome for fifty years that it seems superfluous to describe him. Once a week he used to come and spend the afternoon alone with me, either in the garden or upstairs in the red drawing-room, which witnessed the most amazing games of romps, and on Sundays I was solemnly sent to have breakfast with him. Perched on a high chair opposite to him at table, I used to discuss with him the affairs of the universe—entirely from a three-year-old point of view. Afterwards he took me for a drive, or, when I was old enough, to church, and returned me to my people at the end of the day, always with the same solemn assurance that I had been "very good." Kindest, simplest, most genial of men—with a great empty place

in his child-loving heart, a place kept for me to his last day—who could be anything but "very good" with him?

My other friend was Del Nero, a distinguished violinist, who used to send me ceremonious invitations to dinner. Then my long-suffering Maria would dress me in my best frock and take me down to his queer, dark little apartment in the Corso, and call for me towards Ave Maria. We had a wonderful twelve o'clock dinner —dishes which would have slain any child not born in Rome, I think; and then Del Nero would bring out his violin and play to me till I fell asleep on the horsehair sofa. And when I woke up there were bonbons to take home with me, and always some queer little toy which the dear man had kept hidden away to console me for our parting.

Also in the spring of that year I heard my first opera. On the Thursday in Carnival week the "Veglione" or masked ball took place in the evening, and the only *matinée* of the whole year was given in the afternoon. So all the children went, and enjoyed themselves immensely, regardless of the fact that the management disdained to suit the performance to their tastes in any way. The opera I assisted at was some old one, very like the *Forza del Destino* which Verdi produced much later, for the first time I witnessed that gloomy production it brought back every scene of the memorable Carnival afternoon. I saw myself and my two sisters in gay silk frocks, with fur-trimmed capes over our bare shoulders; I saw my own fat, pink face crowned with a wreath of tiny roses, and Maria's dark one behind it as she held me up to the glass, saying, "My angel, you are more beautiful than the sun or the moon!"

Then came the great crowded opera-house, the music,

the lights, the amazing persons on the stage, who seemed to be in such deep affliction and yet sang so pleasantly; it was all an unforgettable glimpse of heaven, never renewed after the complaisant Roman attendant had departed to make way for the Lancashire Methodist whose horror of theatres made her dissuade my mother from letting me be contaminated by entering them.

There was to be no crossing the Alps in that summer of 1854. A villa was taken at the Bagni di Lucca, and there, among the chestnut woods and along the banks of the lovely river Lima, I had my first donkey rides, and very delightful they were. Maria had left me for some reason (we always remained the best of friends, and the dear old woman came to see me regularly after I was grown up), and I was handed over to a pretty little maid called Lalla, the daughter of the handsome, hot-tempered cook, Margherita, who was one of my most faithful allies when at home. She had put the fear of death on her daughter regarding the care of my important little self, and nobly did Lalla fulfil her charge. Being accustomed to displace a good deal of atmosphere, I imagine I was a little *de trop* in a house where my successor was expected, and I used to be sent away in the morning with Lalla and the donkey, Giuseppe following on foot to see that we came to no harm; so we three spent day after day in the woods, Giuseppe patiently filling my silver mug with wild strawberries whenever I was hungry, and producing more solid food from his pocket at the appointed hour.

In these excursions we constantly met a fair, rather stout lady and a smiling young gentleman, both of whom were very good to me. The lady was the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, spending the summer at her château near the hot baths, and her companion was the Marchese

Celso Bargagli, a Sienese potentate, for many years her *Gentil 'uomo d'onore*. The Grand Duchess was fond of children, and was, I suppose, struck by the appearance of florid health so common among those of Northern races, but much rarer in the Italian little ones with their darker skins and more nervous temperaments. She could never go past me without patting my legs, and exclaiming with devout admiration, "Che belle ciancotte!" a Tuscan phrase which I had never heard before.

I liked her, but with Celso I fell in love at once and for always. He made the acquaintance of my people and came constantly to see me, explaining gravely that the visits were intended for me. Nothing could keep me out of the drawing-room when I knew he was there. I used to sit on his knee and listen to the stories he could tell so delightfully, and I have a happy recollection of a wonderful doll for which he sent to Florence, all a fluff of pink silk and fair curls, and blue eyes like Celso's own. It was the beginning of a life-long friendship, which just missed becoming a much closer relation. As I grew bigger he used to come down to Rome from time to time to see how I was turning out; the year I was fifteen he stayed some weeks, and then, to my regret, went away and returned no more. I found out later that he had approached my people with the intention of carrying me off at last to his palace in Siena, and I was quite angry to hear that my mother, without consulting me, had replied that I was a mere baby, and that she had no intention of letting me get married for several years to come. I was really sorry, for, although he was twenty years older than myself, the man was so true and kind that I felt sure that I should have been very happy with him, and—I had known him all my life!

Two or three years later he married a far better and sweeter girl than I—Ermellina Douglas Scotti, of Milan, and quartered the Bleeding Heart on his own wildly fantastic escutcheon.

We happened to be spending the summer at Siena that year, and I saw a good deal of him and his gentle, dark-eyed bride. She was as young as I was, and it had been a *mariage de convenance*. She had not known and loved the man as a good friend for years and years. Celso adored her, but he was too old. The palace was very huge and sombre; her anxious relatives had provided her with an elderly maid, who looked after her as a capable nurse looks after a child. She needed youth and brightness, poor little thing; and, wanting these, she faded away, and died when her baby was born.

To Celso it was a crushing blow. He transferred all his hopes and affections to the boy, but was terribly puzzled over the problem of bringing him up. The last time I saw him—and then I had sons of my own—we talked it over, and, as he went away, he said sadly, "Nothing ever makes up to a boy for the loss of his mother!"

Alas, the boy turned out badly, and my dear Celso—who deserved so much happiness in life—died of a broken heart. Things get strangely sorted out in this world, and there never is quite enough practical justice to go round.

The summer at the Bagni di Lucca, the fourth in my life, since I was an April child, was marked by a great event. On August 2 my brother Marion was born, and the whole family at once felt that "the true master of the house had arrived." My father was beside himself with joy, and showered presents on all of us to make us understand and share it. I had been so long alone in

the nursery, my two elder sisters being always with the governess, that I was delighted with the idea of having a companion. I gathered up all my dearest possessions—a woolly parrot and some white silk shoes, into one of which Papa had just dropped a big silver dollar—and carried them as offerings to the new baby; but when I found that he took no notice of them, and refused to come down on the floor and play with me, I was deeply offended, and could not imagine why so much fuss had been made over him.

I very soon found out, for from that day my reign was over, and I was relegated to wholesome obscurity, doubtless the best possible discipline, but trying all the same. Fortunately my rather sore little heart opened to Marion—or Frank, as he was called then—and I became the most faithful of his subjects. Of course I knew more about him than any one else, and soon began to watch his progress with elder-sisterly anxiety, much distressed at his raging little tempers, and triumphantly pleased with the applause he everywhere elicited. He was so beautiful that, after our return to Rome, our nurse was constantly stopped in the street to answer questions about him. Once, however, he obtained a blessing not intended for him at all. It was January 21, the feast of St. Agnes, and on that day the Campagna shepherds brought the firstlings of their flocks, all curled and beribboned, to the church of St. Agnes fuori le mura, where the poetical ceremony of blessing the lambs took place.

That day the officiating Cardinal was a very old man, and his sight was dim. When the English nurse, curious to see everything, pushed forward with Marion, a bundle of fluffy whiteness, asleep in her arms, the good Eminenza

thought she was carrying a lamb, and, exclaiming "Che bell' agnellino!" gravely bent over the baby with murmured prayer and blessing hand. The woman knew no Italian, and could not explain matters; and, in spite of her Nonconformist principles, was delighted at the mistake, believing that it would bring good luck to her charge.

But Marion's disposition was anything but lamblike. He had a most imperious temper, combined with the stubborn resolve to do nothing for himself that other people could possibly be coerced into doing for him. My time for years was spent in picking up his toys and giving them back to him. He absolutely refused to learn to walk, and by the time he was eighteen months old was so big and heavy that his unfortunate bearer (no self-respecting woman would push a baby-carriage in the streets of Rome) was puzzled as to how to get him about. If she let him down for a moment his wrath broke loose in a storm of protest, and the most humiliating moment of my life came on a day when we were climbing the Via Quattro Fontane on our way back from the Pincio. Her aching arms could carry Master Marion no longer, and she stood him on his feet for a moment. He immediately sat down in the middle of the street, roaring with rage, and a friendly policeman had to pick him up and bring him home, fighting and struggling all the way, while I followed in deep abasement, sadly carrying a shoe that he had kicked off in his indignation.

The next care to assail me was the question of my brother's education. I talked what I considered sense to him, and could never get a reasonable reply. By the time he was two years old the terrible conviction forced itself upon me that he was going to be an idiot! I never spoke of this secret sorrow; since the English nurse ruled

me I had learnt never to tell my thoughts, and nobody inquired after them.

Under the daily oppression of a morose and tyrannical character my natural exuberance and expansiveness had been schooled to a watchful silence and self-control. Only away from her did I ever let myself go, when things were really too much for me. One of my bitterest discoveries was that there were books in the world and I could not read them. It was one winter day when I was four years old; I had strayed into the schoolroom and found my sister Annie, looking very happy, with a book in her hand.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Reading a fairy story to myself," she answered proudly.

I collapsed in a heap on the floor, and wept in speechless grief. My mother, Miss Watson, and all the family came and stood around me in dismay, while I sobbed in trouble too deep for words. When at last I could answer their inquiries, I pointed to Annie, who was looking scornfully on at this exhibition of weakness.

"*She* can read and I can't!" I cried. "Why? Why?"

"You shall read too," my mother said; and dear Miss Watson took me in hand then and there. The process was such a gentle and delightful one that I remember nothing of it except that on my fifth birthday I found that the world was full of books and I could read them all.

CHAPTER V

A GALLERY OF MEMORY PICTURES

Pio Nono—A picture of the Holy Father on the Pincian Hill—The home of Sixtus V.—The walled-up window—Michelangelo's cypresses—Changes—A beautiful view—A dreaded spot—Sixtus V. and his sister—Princess Massimo—Arsoli—Francesca Massimo—Prince Massimo and the postage stamps—Arsoli's hansom.

IT can only occur rarely that a child's imagination is dominated by one great historical figure ever in the background of events, and only emerging from time to time in enchanting splendour into the realities of life. Yet to me, the Roman-born daughter of American parents, non-Catholics, severed in tastes and circumstances from everything connected with the Vatican circle, Pius IX. was for many years the most important personality on my horizon, a living power, a centre round which fancy and tradition wove rainbow after rainbow of thought.

I must have seen him many times before the occasion which my memory counts the first, for in those safe and happy days he was constantly to be met, driving through the city, or taking his walks in the villas and suburbs, attended by his Cardinals and Noble Guards, and followed by the court carriages with their slow-stepping black horses and solemn servants. But I have always been grateful for the particular picture of him which precedes all the others in my recollection.

It was a bright winter's morning, and my brother

Marion and I had been sent to take our airing on the Pincian Hill. The gardens, for some reason, were almost empty, and we had romped joyfully in and out among the flower beds, launched paper boats on the dimpling crystal of our favourite fountain, played hide-and-seek among the hundreds of bust-crowned pillars, thrown kisses and rose-petals to Marcus Aurelius and the young Augustus, and, I am sorry to say, made naughty faces at Socrates and Seneca because they were so ugly. Sun-fed, breathless, steeped in the joy of a Roman morning, we had sobered down and were walking obediently beside our nurse along the wide central avenue, when a wonderful vision broke on our sight.

Coming straight towards us out of the swimming radiance of the noonday, with all Rome lying low behind him and St. Peter's in the distance, was a tall, benign-looking man in robes of snowy white. On either side of him walked a Cardinal in sweeping geranium silk, and around and behind these three a detachment of Noble Guards marched in fan formation, white plumes tossing from their gleaming helmets, silver cuirasses blinking dazzlingly in the sun, sabres and spurs clanking royally, and the blue and silver and gold of their uniforms spreading away from the central group like rays from a prism.

We stood still and watched this splendid company approach, and I heard my nurse exclaim in an awed whisper, "The Pope!" The next moment he, too, stood still, and beckoning to one of the Noble Guards, sent him to bring us to him, for Pius IX. never passed little foreign children in his walks without pausing to give them his blessing. My brother ran forward eagerly, and I seem even now to see his golden curls shining

in the sun as he took the officer's hand and trotted beside him across the open space to where the Pope was waiting for us. I thought his face the kindest and most beautiful I had ever seen. It was nearly as white as his robes, and illuminated by dark eyes full of benevolent light; on his lips was the gentlest of smiles, and, as I knew later, in his heart he was breathing a prayer that the alien lambkins might be brought into the One True Fold. Tenderly he laid his hand on my brother's head, blessed us in God's Holy Name, asked whose children we were, and passed smiling on his way.

For days afterwards we could think and speak of nothing else. When I was allowed to go and sit alone in our old drawing-room, from whose open windows I could look over the whole Campagna—windows through which the sun poured on vast stretches of crimson carpet, giving me a heavenly sense of magnificence and solitude—I used to dream that the Holy Father would open the door and come and sit in the big gilt chair and tell me all I wanted to know about himself.

Our villa had been the home of another Pope, Sixtus V., whose arms were painted all over the stairways and ceilings, and I felt that it would be quite a proper place to receive his successor in. One Pope—I think Gregory XVI.—had paid a visit to our neighbours the Strozzis, and from my nursery I could see the window in their palace through which he had deigned to look out—walled up now, so that no less august presence should ever desecrate it, and ornamented with a magnificent piece of mosaic simulating a gold-embroidered carpet hanging far down from the sill. But the Strozzi palace seemed to me a small and modern affair compared with the one in which I had been so fortunate as to first see the light.

Far on the upper outskirts of the city this stood, a great pile, golden grey with age, its enormous windows set foursquare to the world, its topmost terrace open to the winds, and commanding a view of the entire city below. Soracte and the "dark Ciminian hills" lay to the north; the Sabines, jewelled with villages, to the east; the exquisite lines of the Alban hills to the south; and towards the fairy west the wide stretches of the Campagna rolled softly to the sea, their gold and purple emptiness touched here and there with the shaft of a ruined watch-tower, where shy, dark-eyed shepherds herded their flocks at night. The Campagna was so near, the villa so vast, that the gardens stretched away and lost themselves in it long before their boundary was reached.

In all the years that we played there my brother and I never got outside the grounds on the southern side, though we walked our little feet tired in trying to find out where they ended. But long before our time the outlying spaces had ceased to be gardens, and had been turned to agricultural uses. They were dotted with the stone huts of the peasants, who patiently planted cabbages and lettuce, fennel and Indian corn round broken fountains and tumbled pedestals; who used the Temple of Minerva Medica and a beautiful but deserted Renaissance palace on the outskirts as storehouses for grain, and who sometimes crept into the gardens proper on dark nights, to steal the fruit on the old orange trees in the "Viale," which ran the whole length of the distance from the Piazza di Termini (now Delle Terme) to the Piazza of Santa Maria Maggiore, now called the Esquiline. At right angles to this Viale, a quadruple avenue of enormous cypresses slowly rose to terminate, far away south, in a steep artificial hill crowned with the "Belvedere," the

pavilion commanding the widest possible view, without which no pleasance would have been complete for the beauty-loving magnates of the later Renaissance.

The cypresses were everywhere in that old garden; for century after century they had shed their needles on the ground, till the soil around their huge, upstanding roots was as velvety and fragrant as powdered sandalwood; but their newest topmost plumes waved in feathery freshness at the level of our upper windows—delicate dark lace against the matchless Roman sky.

The house itself was built of materials filched from the Baths of Diocletian, whose huge sulky-looking arches covered several acres of ground near us. There is no destroying that titanic masonry; and though many a palace has been built with the stone and marble that could be removed, even the Vandals who have ruled Rome since 1870 have had to utilize and build round the masses of bricks and concrete, which nothing short of dynamite would dislodge.

My dear father, who loved old grandeur and needed much space, fell in love with the Villa Negroni, and took it on a life-long lease from the owner, Prince Massimo, who reserved for himself a vast warren of rooms on the first floor, and gave up all the rest to us. He only brought his family there in the spring and autumn for a short time; the winter saw him housed in the forbidding Palazzo Massimo, down in the oldest part of the city, and the summer months were spent at Arsoli, his feudal castle in the Sabines. He gave my father permission to erect a series of studios on the eastern side of the house, over the ancient reservoir of the Baths of Diocletian; and in these studios I often took refuge from nursery tyranny, and sat for whole days among the shining white

statues, perfectly happy with a ball of clay and a modelling stick, listening to the delicate ring of chisel on marble, still to me the sweetest music in the world.

My father joyfully abetted me in these escapades, and I remember that when people came to look for me, he used to lift me up and hide me away, far above their heads, in the body of the charger which had been cast in sections for the Richmond monument.

From the studios, I could slip out through a dark ilex grove always full of singing birds, and climb a little hill on which sat a colossal statue of Roma Imperatrix, looking down with stony eyes on her vassal city, while above her head waved the spires of some giant cypresses planted by Michelangelo, who used to walk in these gardens with his friend the great Pope Paul III. Up in the crimson drawing-room I wanted to see Pio Nono, but here, under his own trees, I wished Michelangelo would come and talk to me, and tell me why I loved his statues and was so horribly afraid of his paintings.

It is all gone now. The railway runs where the ilex grove broke in gold and green rustlings over my head; the railway station stands on the site of our studios; gone are the orange walk and the cypress avenue, and the lovely fountain court guarded by stone lions and encircled by cypresses wreathed to their crests with climbing roses. The fountain had been playing for three hundred years; and the place was so quiet and remote that, when we children looked down from our nursery windows on moonlit nights, we used to see a ring of little Campagna foxes drinking silently out of the low marble basin. In our days life had ebbed away from the old villa, but it had, in its earlier splendour, enjoyed its full share of dramatic and picturesque incident.

It had been the home of one of the worst women who ever lived—Vittoria Accoramboni, a beautiful fiend who married Francesco Peretti, the remarkably handsome young relative of Sixtus V. Wishing to replace him by another man who had wooed her formerly without success, she sent him out from this house to be assassinated by the bravos whom the old admirer complacently hired for her. He paid his own penalty, for she soon tired of him and made away with him too ; and was very properly murdered herself, a month later, for the sake of the great wealth he had left her. She lived, I imagine, on the first floor of the palace, and her ghost did not walk in our part of the house ; but all through my early years, without any knowledge of the story, I had the sense of a bad feminine presence about the place, and connected it in my small mind with a spot on our side of the high wall which divided the orange walk from the Via Strozzi. Here the plaster had scaled off, leaving on the fiery red of the bricks the form of a woman writhing in some hideous torment. Just below it I once found a long black snake coiled many times round the trunk of an orange tree, with hanging yet protruded head—the image of the serpent whom all the pictures represented as beguiling Eve. Ever afterwards I raced past that spot as fast as my feet would carry me !

After Vittoria Accoramboni had met her doom a much more respectable lady—Camilla, the sister of Sixtus V.—made her home at the villa. She, it seems, was somewhat uplifted by her brother's advancement, and went to visit him in the costume of a Roman princess. The Pontiff, who had no mind to forget that he had herded swine in his youth, refused to recognize her in such garb, and she departed, abased, to don once more the peasant

dress which she had always worn. When she presented herself in this the Pope received her gladly, and gave much thought and money to making the villa a delightful residence for her.

The Massimo apartment downstairs was full of long galleries and dimly gorgeous rooms. We used to play there sometimes with Donna Francesca and her brother, but there was sadness in the very air. They had beautiful eighteenth-century toys—one a small travelling carriage complete in every detail, which we amused ourselves with rolling up and down a gallery a hundred feet long. But at one end of the gallery was a chapel, whence tall candles and some dark old pictures looked out at us from behind heavy grated and gilded doors; and from the other Princess Massimo occasionally emerged: a tall, pale woman with a very sad face, so unlike my own mother's smiling countenance that she frightened me a little, gentle and kind though she always was. Her life was one which a woman of her position could only with difficulty lead now—a long chain of prayer and duty. Devoted to her children, she made it a point never to leave them alone with the servants, and we could see her every morning going out of the house at eight o'clock to walk with our playmate, Filippo, or, as he was usually called, Arsoli, to the Nobles' College, where he was receiving his education.

Before returning she heard Mass in a neighbouring church, then came home to remain with Francesca and devote herself to household duties till the hour of the afternoon drive, which is still as much a part of the Roman's day as sunrise or sunset; then the old-fashioned open carriage with hammercloth, and coachman, and lacqueys hanging on behind, all "done" in grey and

magenta, would come round to the *porte cochère*, and the Prince and Princess and Donna Francesca climbed in, and drove straight to the Nobles' College, to pick up the boy, who, I fancy, would much have preferred a game with his companions to the solemn drive twice around Villa Borghese, twice up and down the Corso at a foot's pace, in the procession of coaches which crowded it in the late afternoon—the horses of one carriage almost resting their noses on the hood of the one in front—and then home, to get through the time as best he could till ten o'clock, the invariable hour for supper. Old-fashioned Romans like the Massimos still dined at twelve in those prehistoric days, and took nothing more till the late supper, at which even the youngest of the children assisted.

Arsoli was a funny little object in his school costume. All pupils of the Nobles' College (and there were boys of seven in the youngest class) had to appear in full evening dress, long black trousers, tail coat, white tie, and white gloves. In the street they wore the voluminous double-caped black cloak, which the Romans have only relinquished of late years; one end was thrown over the left shoulder, and the whole was crowned with a very high tall hat. The "internes" were taken for daily walks by their preceptors, who were all priests; and the long procession of solemnly clad manikins, marching two and two in the most dignified manner, was one of the most familiar sights in old Rome.

The daughters of noble families were generally educated in the convent; but Francesca Massimo was a terrible pickle, and never stayed long without being sent home to repent of her sins for weeks at a time. She was very fond of coming up to our nursery, where she

scandalized us by licking all the jam off other people's bread; and made me furious by taking possession of my rocking-horse, and leaving me only the wooden tail to ride upon. Later in life she added various chapters to the more sensational chronicles of the town; and I met her again a few years before she died, naughty and amusing as ever, with a most unorthodox lazy twinkle in her black eyes, and the old impertinent drawl in her voice, though even then her life hung by a mere thread and she was rarely out of pain. Her father was a most unregenerate robber of postage stamps. He was for many years Postmaster-General, and utilized his facilities to make a valuable collection. America was a long way off from Rome at that time; and every letter that my people received from the United States had had the stamps boldly cut out of the envelope before it was handed over to the postman.

His son, Arsoli, had anything but pious tendencies, though his appearance was almost severe in its propriety—a cross between that of a confidential butler and a parish priest. When I returned to Rome four years after my marriage, I found him the proud possessor of a real hansom cab, the only one in Italy. This he had imported from London, and had had it painted and lined in the greenish grey and sickly magenta which were the family colours. Whenever he could, he inveigled his women friends into taking *tête-à-tête* drives with him; and he came to me, I remember, and entreated me, for the sake of old times, to accompany him on a "trottata," adding by way of inducement that the event would be commemorated by the inscription of my name on a silver tablet which hung inside the vehicle, recording the name of every lady who had thus favoured him.

Though I was still young enough to enjoy anything in the shape of a lark, I managed to resist this alluring temptation. The vision of my frivolous self, driving down the Corso with Arsoli's unbeautiful countenance beside me and those awful colours for a background, was really more than I could contemplate.

CHAPTER VI

SIGHTS OF THE SEASONS IN OLD ROME

The seasons and their pleasures—The Pifferari—Our Madonna and her musicians—Christmas night—Nativity music in the crypt—Christmas Day and the Chapel of the Manger—Twelfth Night—The "Befana"—The Carnival—The "Barberi"—Shrove Tuesday—The "Moccolo"—"Il Carnevale è morto!"—Ash Wednesday—Easter confession and anxious servants—"Restitution"—Giuseppe and his Easter offering—Holy Thursday—The arrival of the peasants—The Roman ladies and the Holy Father's guests—Holy Week—"Tenebræ"—A wonderful moment—Mustaphà's "Miserere"—"Mustaphà"—Easter morning in St. Peter's—Easter evening and the illumination of St. Peter's—"Did he come down alive?"

PRINCESS MASSIMO'S Catholic heart yearned over my pretty mother and the young family growing up outside the pale of the Church, and she did all that she could to bring us into the fold; but early tradition and the violent prejudices of various Protestant friends made any conversion impossible at that time. Nevertheless the Catholic ceremonies were too interesting and splendid to be overlooked; and our year was clearly marked off by them, each season bringing its special pleasures and spectacles, which we were allowed to enjoy even when we were tiny children.

The year began for us with the first Sunday in Advent, when hundreds of "Pifferari," the bagpipe-players from the mountains of Romagna and the kingdom of Naples, entered the city in little companies to play their wild, haunting music before the many street shrines, where, in

those days of faith, the lamps were kept burning and the flowers fresh all the year round. Almost every great house had one such shrine somewhere on the outer wall of dwelling or garden, displaying generally a painting of the Mother and Child. The picture was usually set in a deep niche, and protected by a wire screen (always locked for fear of sacrilege), behind which the lamp burned night and day, and vases of flowers made constant sweetness.

During the weeks of Advent the Pifferari, in their picturesque costumes, played before one after another of these open-air sanctuaries all day long, their quiet old hymns filling the city with music, and reminding all good Christians that the birth of Christ was at hand. I remember one group that constantly came to *our* Madonna: there was an old man with white hair and flowing beard, a fine young fellow who was evidently his son, and a bright-eyed little boy who accompanied the bagpipes on a reed flute—the original pipe of Pan. All were dressed in the peaked hat, scarlet vest, gold-buttoned jacket, and white goat-skin breeches which constituted the mountain costume, and were shod with sandals and twined leg-straps called "cioccie"—whence the name "Cioccería" for the Abruzzi district, where they are still universal. With devout concentration they would execute their "canzona," some air which had been taught by father to son for a thousand years past, full of gay bird voices with an understrain of melancholy and longing—so simple that the shepherds might have sung it as they made their way to Bethlehem on the first Christmas night, yet so poignant that the heart of humanity seemed to be crying through it for the promised Redeemer. When the last note died away the little boy's

hat would come off, and he would look round at the bystanders for sympathy—and pennies, which were always freely given; so that the devout musicians, while gaining much merit, made a useful harvest to take home to the family waiting for their return in the "castello" far away in the hills.

With Christmas night came the wonderful Nativity music in the crypt of St. Peter's, when in the darkness, under the heavy arches which guard the tomb of the Apostles, every voice of nature seemed to sing its pæan of praise. One heard the wind rustling in the trees, the river dancing on its way, the twittering of birds in the dewy dawn, the triumphant joy of watching angels; and even a child's heart could not help responding, "O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord!"

Then on Christmas Day there was the visit to the Chapel of the Manger in Santa Maria Maggiore, our own church, the "Mother of all Churches," whose noble front we could see through the ironwork of the gate which divided the orange avenue from the Piazza. There was the very manger itself, with a smiling Bambino Gesù reposing on the straw, His sweet Mother and St. Joseph kneeling in adoration, and the shepherds with their lambs crowding eagerly forward to look at Him—all life-sized figures, so natural and charming that we never needed any other teaching about the Christmas Mystery.

On Twelfth Night came the "Befana," the great Epiphany Fair in Piazza Navona. With wildly beating hearts we used to depart, accompanied by a trusty body-guard of servants, to drive through the dark streets until the crowd made further progress for a carriage

impossible. By that time the air was full of the wildest din, tin trumpets, penny whistles, and strident rattles all in full blast, so that speech was useless and we could only hold tight to guiding hands and let ourselves be led round the Piazza, stopping at every booth on the way to spend our money on the bright tin toys and strange sweets which were the speciality of the season. We had hardly heard of Santa Claus, but the "Befana," the kind witch who walks on the housetops and brings toys to good children and rods to naughty ones, was a very real personage to us.

A few weeks later the excitement of the Carnival illuminated life for ten days. To be dressed in a real domino and stand on a balcony in the Corso, flinging bushels of confetti and hundreds of posies at all and sundry, was something to dream of for the rest of the year. Every window in the street was hung with tapestries and garlands; the bands were playing in every square; the towering cars, wreathed with flowers and filled with men and women in dazzling costumes, passed up and down in endless procession; the crowd below surged, and screamed and danced a thousand antics, till the great moment struck when a company of mounted dragoons came pounding along to clear the way. Breathless silence followed their passage. Then far away, from the Piazza del Popolo, sounded a muffled thundering of hoofs and a roar of voices, ever nearer and more and more deafening, till the "Barberi," the riderless race-horses, wild with fear at the yells of the populace and the clattering of tinsel hung all over their bodies, swept into sight, flew past, and were lost to view as the crowd broke and closed in behind them—and the day was over! Only on Shrove Tuesday did the festivities begin again

after the race. Then every man, woman, and child flourished a "moccolo," a lighted taper, and tried to keep it burning while extinguishing as many as possible of those around. For a couple of hours the street was a river of shifting light, and when it died out, thousands of voices joined in the dirge of the dying Carnival: "Il Carnevale è morto! Chi lo sepellirà?" (The Carnival is dead. Who will bury it?)

With Ash Wednesday the city turned to its prayers with a will. Our pleasant, talkative servants, who had been smilingly robbing us all through the year, began to be strangely silent and to wear anxious faces. The Easter confession was imminent, and there would be no absolution without restitution! This was tactfully made in the form of presents and offerings; but it was not until later in life that I discovered why the dear old butler, Giuseppe, used to bring me a really pretty piece of jewellery about Easter time. On the other hand, during Lent, the extremely pious woman who was my mother's maid for forty years, wore an air of joyful *insouciance* which must have been most irritating to her less scrupulous colleagues. *She* went to confession all the year round and would not have taken a pin to save her life!

On the Fridays in Lent the "Stations" were preached and prayed by Capuchin monks in the arena of the Coliseum, when thousands of penitent sinners knelt on the soil which had received the blood of the Martyrs. Holy Week, I must confess, was one long chain of heavenly dissipation to us. We had been taught little or nothing of its religious meaning, but the music, the lights, the processions, were something to which we looked forward with palpitating excitement.

By Holy Thursday many thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Italy, but more especially from the South, had arrived in Rome. Foreigners from all over the world flocked to the hotels, but little notice was taken of them. The housing and caring for the poor peasants, some of whom had walked two hundred miles or more, in great companies, praying and singing hymns all the way, occupied all the attention of the authorities. They were the personal guests of the Holy Father, and were made to feel that they were his especially beloved children. The vast building of the "Santo Spirito," which ran all the way from the Castel Sant' Angelo to the Piazza of St. Peter's, was portioned out into dormitories and refectories, where food and lodging were provided for all who had brought the necessary recommendation from their parish priest. The women and children were housed separately from the men; and it was one of the proudest privileges of the Roman princes and princesses to wait upon them, for no others might share in this labour of love and humility.

All day long the pilgrims, when not assisting at the religious ceremonies in St. Peter's, wandered about the city, taking in its thousand wonders to describe on their return; but when Ave Maria rang, they came crowding into the spacious hospice, to find a splendid supper prepared and good beds for their weary limbs. The men were marshalled away to their own side, where ladies did not penetrate, so I never watched the proceedings there; but the women's quarters, to which we had access, presented a scene of unique interest. The greatest ladies in the world, in Court dress of black velvet and a long black veil, and wearing their most magnificent family jewels, came to do honour to the

Pope's guests. They received the "contadine" and their babies, and led them to the tables loaded with good things which ran down the hall, and guided them to their places, where each found her supper separately laid out. But before enjoying this, the poor dusty feet that had travelled so far must be washed, and the princesses, following Christ's example, went round from one to another on their knees to perform this kindly act. The first time I witnessed it, I found myself beside the group under Princess Massimo's care, and I shall never forget my amazement when I saw that dear and holy lady stagger forward with a tub of steaming hot water, and then kneel down and gently remove the sandals and stockings of a young woman who carried a tiny baby in her arms, and who, as I knew by her costume, must have come from the further fastnesses of the Apennines. The Princess was wearing the famous Massimo pearls, string after string of enormous shimmering globes which hung so far below her waist that they kept getting hopelessly mixed up with the hot water and soapsuds. Talking kindly to the dazzled "contadina," she made a very thorough job of her distasteful task, and, when it was accomplished, carried away her tub like any hospital nurse and prepared to attend to the next on the bench. For three nights, from Holy Thursday to Easter Eve, she and her peers rendered this tribute to poverty and faith, while their husbands and sons did the same for the men on the other side of the building.

The next joy of Holy Week was the assisting at "Tenebræ" in the Sistine Chapel. A limited number of tickets was issued for this, but a most unholy scramble for places always occurred when the iron gates were opened and the waiting crowd rushed in. We of course

regarded this as the finest kind of fun, but our poor governess, who managed somehow to hold on to the three of us until she had us all safely seated inside, must have had some anxious moments.

Tenebræ began at three o'clock, but long before they were over the chapel was heavy with awesome darkness. Michelangelo's terrifying "Last Judgment" overhead was lost in the shadows, and the only points of light were the beams of the ever-diminishing triangle of tapers near the altar. As one by one these were extinguished, we knew that the great moment was drawing nigh, and when the last was taken away, breathless silence reigned in the dense night that had fallen around. Then, alone and without accompaniment, the sweetest and divinest soprano I have ever heard began the Miserere. Tender, almost wailing at first, its notes rose higher and clearer, purer and stronger, till the great dark space was filled with such a cry for love, for mercy, for redemption, that it seemed as if Supreme Justice itself must be vanquished at that appeal. We forgot that we knew and loved the singer, forgot that his tall figure and gentle face were familiar in our home; when Mustaphà sang the Miserere, even we, ignorant little pagans that we were, felt as if the greatest of the Archangels were calling us from the Gates of Heaven.

He had been a foundling, left at the "Pietà" in his infancy, with no other dower than that strange Turkish name pinned to his clothes. But Nature, which had been stern to him in some ways, had given him a voice of matchless power, sweetness, and compass, and a heart as sweet and big and pure. Fair as any English girl, with eyes of radiant blue, and a simple dignity of manner which was almost regal, he lived and died a mystery,

perfectly happy in the benign fate which had led him early in life to be the first soprano in the most perfect company in the world, the Pope's choir. For some thirty or forty years he had that joy, and when age came upon him and the notes, though sweet as ever, grew a little faint, he smiled at the successor who could never be his equal, and gently stepped aside to wait for the day when the heavenly choirs would admit him to sing with them, not "Miserere mei Deus," but "Te Deum laudamus" for evermore. The last time I saw him he was growing feeble, and I had to come close to hear what he was saying; but there was no sadness in his surrender, only peace and light, and soon afterwards he passed away.

The Pope's choir was quite separate from that of St. Peter's, and the beloved Mustaphà did not sing in the Church; but his absence was made up for to me on Easter morning by the silver trumpets which pealed out Rossini's chant of triumph far up in the dome at the moment of the Elevation. I forget how many thousand people were supposed to be kneeling around us—I can testify to the truth of the tradition that, no matter what crowds it receives, there is always room for more in St. Peter's. We had seen Pius IX. borne up the long aisle in his pontifical chair, with the tiara on his head, blessing all as he passed; the dazzling procession of guards, of Bishops and Cardinals, and nobles in seventeenth-century costume had moved slowly by; the long High Mass, with its yet incomprehensible ceremonial, was beginning to tire me, for I was still a very little girl, when that indescribable music descended from above and lifted me away from consciousness for a time. When it ceased I found myself kneeling on the pavement, crying helplessly, while my recalcitrant Protestant guardian, who

had stood obstinately erect during the whole service, was trying to pull me to my feet, and whispering angrily, "You are not to kneel down; get up at once!"—the first declaration of hostilities destined to meet me in a thousand shapes and cramp my life in one way and another for five-and-twenty long years afterwards.

But the crowning moment of our whole year came on the evening of Easter Sunday. Then we climbed the long twisting stairs leading to the tower terrace, and stood under its open arches, in the soft April darkness, to gaze at St. Peter's, outlined and covered from portico to pinnacle with stars of silver light. Far away across the vast dusky city we could trace every detail of cross and dome and column, quivering with mysterious radiance against the velvet gloom of sky. Not a sound was to be heard. We knew that the entire populace of the city and the peasants in every hamlet in the mountains were watching with us in that intense silence. Then, from Sant' Angelo, one cannon boomed out its signal, and ere its echoes died away the silver summit of the cross on the dome had flamed to molten gold, which ran in a torrent of glory down, down, from dome to roof, from roof to pillar, from pillar to colonnade, till the whole great distant fane was one breathing hive of gold. So it would breathe and glow through the night, only dying out when the sky paled to dawn.

In after-years I would never let any one tell me by what magic the starlight glowed into sunlight, though I knew that a man stood by each ray and that the transformation was the work of human hands. For me it is magic still, even as it was when we crept down to our little beds in the friendly old nursery, holding hands tightly and asking each other, "Did he get down alive?"

For the task of changing the topmost light on the towering cross, four hundred feet above the ground, was so desperately perilous that a condemned criminal was granted his pardon if he chose to undertake it; and in those days of faith confession was made and absolution received before attempting that climb for freedom.

Life has shown me many strange and beautiful things, and some sad and terrible ones. Its lessons I have had to learn in many homes, in long exiles, under alien stars that never shone upon my childhood. Famished with nostalgia, I once knelt all night at my porthole to see the North Star rise over the ocean after being hidden from my sight for three long years—to be certain that, at last, I was coming back to my own people and my own world. But the one abiding homesickness of my sadly misspent life has been for the Rome of my childhood—the saving grace for many a dark hour I have found in the memory of those full young years given to me in the Eternal City.

CHAPTER VII

FIRST VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

The last Christmas with my father—Pietruccio's decorations—Traditions of Sixtus V. duplicated in Tokyo—Paris—A *new* house—Paris en fête—The Duc de Malakoff—His daughter in Vienna—Pearls and diamonds—The *Fulton*—My first sight of a negro barber—New York—My uncles John and Richard—Uncle Richard and the Indian clubs—Bridget and the burglar—A cleverer thief—Uncle John and the French boots—Newport—Aunt Julia Howe—Charles Sumner—The Abolitionists—I take the other side—Sumner and Lincoln—New York in the winter—The great comet—My father leaves us—Bordentown—Adolphe Mailliard—A terrible experience—Nurses and their ways.

THE year 1855 is especially marked for me by its Christmas season, the last my father spent with us. After Marion's birth it seemed as if his joy in life were so complete that he had to give it expression by spreading happiness around him. After the temporary eclipse of my importance, during the first few months of my brother's existence, I again became Papa's companion during many happy hours in the studio; and when that Christmas came round, he and my mother thought out a hundred ways of giving me pleasure. When I opened my eyes on Christmas morning I thought I had dreamt myself into fairyland. A huge rocking-horse stood on its hindlegs, and stared at me from the foot of the bed, which was all spread over with alluring treasures. The very window-curtains near it had pretty things pinned all over them, including a set of ermine furs and a pair of

blue velvet shoes, which at once appealed to my feminine heart. The house had been decorated by the old gardener, Pietruccio, in a fashion of his own, which I never saw repeated till our house-gardener in Tokyo—of all places—astonished me by producing the same decorations, using ripe fruit instead of flowers to give colour to the garlands.

Pietruccio's fancies must have been handed down to him with the other traditions of Sixtus V.'s garden. With golden oranges and crimson apples and honey-coloured pears he reproduced the frescoed wreaths of Raphael's Loggie and the majolica fruit garlands of Luca della Robbia. These last I found again, dazzling even in decay, in the ruins of the Summer Palace which the Jesuit missionaries built for the great Emperor Chien Lung, where the Western hills look to Pekin—all familiar links in the chain that beauty has drawn around the world, from Italy and back again, and which it has been my happy fortune to find out and follow.

Beauty was everywhere that Christmas Day in Rome. In an ecstasy of admiration I stood and watched my mother being dressed for the evening's festivity, her lovely lips smiling at the reflection of herself in the glass, which certainly never showed a fairer picture. I took it all in—the perfect oval face, the dark sweet eyes, the camellia whiteness of the bare shoulders framed in old Venetian point that lost itself in the folds of her tea-rose moire gown, just the tint of her cheeks. She had big pearls in her ears, and a silver girdle knotted round her waist and falling to her feet. I remember that I caught hold of the ends and held them tight with some nameless fear that she might be stolen away from me!

Then came the picture of the Christmas-tree, touching

the ceiling of the great drawing-room, and my father holding up Marion, crowing and dancing with joy, to snatch at some glittering thing that had caught his baby fancy—the two faces so close together, so alike in the blazing blue eyes and noble features, and the man's as triumphantly radiant as the child's. The room was crowded with guests, light and laughter were everywhere; it was the crowning day of what I have since known as the most perfect epoch of my life.

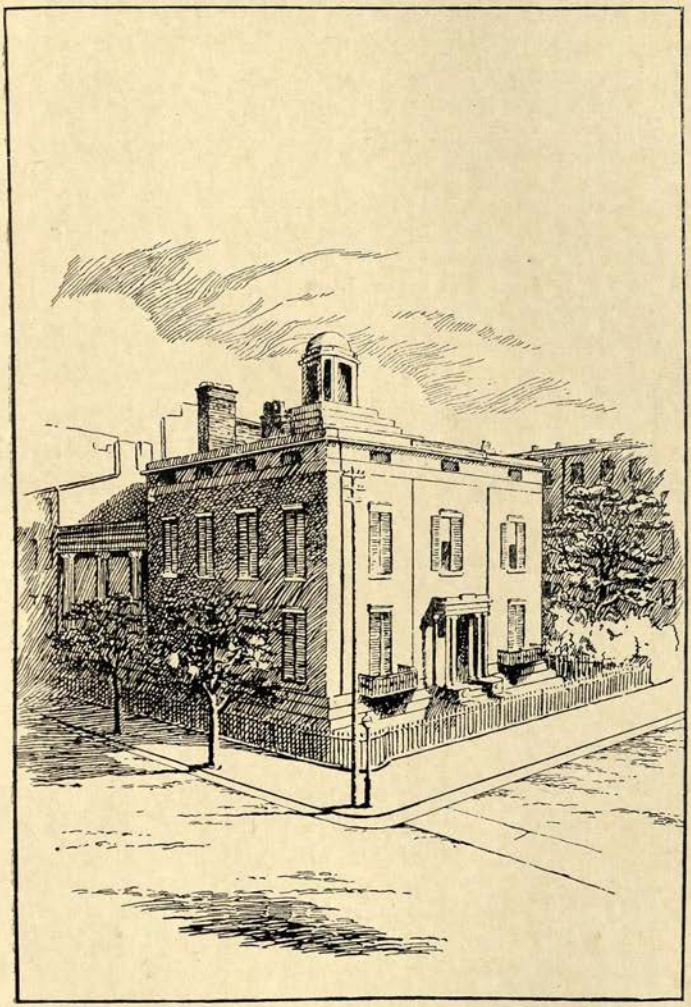
Early that spring we left Rome on our way to America. My grandmother, Mary Crawford, was growing old; my two sisters had been taken to visit her before I was born, and now she wished to see me, her namesake. But before we were well on the way—such a long and tedious one in those days—came the news of her death, a great sorrow to my father. So he did not accompany us, but remained behind to finish working at the details of the Richmond monument; and we, all need for haste being over, stayed a month in Paris, where I celebrated my fifth birthday. I had a great many surprises in Paris. The first was the house we lived in, somewhere near the Champs Élysées. It was a *new* house; everything was very bright, very white or very gilt, and I was always slipping up on the polished parquet floors. The contrast to our Roman home troubled me at first—anything new and shining struck such an unfamiliar note; but I soon grew to like it, and I particularly enjoyed the out-of-doors aspect of things. The Champs Élysées made a delightful playground; there were companies of horsemen in splendid uniforms riding through the avenues; the air was full of band music, and gorgeous personages in equally dazzling equipages were driving about, always in a great hurry as it seemed.

Paris was indeed *en fête* that Spring, the chief subject of interest being the layette of the Prince Imperial, who was born a few days before our arrival. But even this thrilling topic did not quite eclipse the intoxicating triumph of the Crimean successes, and the French were drinking deep of their favourite and peculiarly Gallic mixture "la gloire." The treaty of peace with Russia had just been signed; Marshal Pelissier had been made Duc de Malakoff—and I fancy it was about that time, or a very little latter, that his enchanting daughter was born. I came across her in Vienna, I think in 1881, at an otherwise horribly dull dinner party, where she and I got into a corner and exchanged confidences, I remember. She had not been long married, and was anxious to avoid advertising her enormous fortune among the generally bankrupt Viennese aristocracy by any display of dress or ornament. Very tall and graceful, with a skin like white azalea petals, and a small, *spirituel* face lighted up by dark eyes full of laughter and brilliancy, with her black hair drawn straight back from her dazzling white forehead where it marked the seven points so admired in the eighteenth century, she must have been the central figure in any gathering, whatever she wore. But the desire for simplicity combined with taste which amounted to genius had produced a costume which stood out strikingly among the rather heavy confections of the Viennese tailors—a clinging robe of palest rose velvet, without a single ornament except one long string of huge and perfect pearls.

"I did want to wear diamonds," she whispered. "But you know how it is, if one puts on a few diamonds! People say, 'There she goes with all her fortune on her!' So I fell back on pearls; they are always safe!"

Well, my dear pretty Paris was left behind all too soon, and we went on to Havre, to embark on what was to prove the first of my numberless ocean voyages. I have never forgotten the sufferings of that transit. The steamer was the *Fulton*, a labouring old tub with paddle wheels, three or four storeys deep, only the uppermost one having light or air. For fourteen mortal days she wallowed and kicked in the troughs of the Atlantic, nosing her drunken way through thick fogs, and, for the last part of the time, in and out among a crowd of icebergs, the danger of which somebody kindly explained to me. The siren had not been invented yet, and the only signal we could give to other unfortunates in the white mirk was the tolling of the horrible fog-bells, which rang night and day without intermission. Everybody was seasick except my mother, and, as the governess and servants were incapacitated, she had her hands full. If it had not been that my beloved "compare," Mr. Hooker, crossed with us, I doubt whether I should ever have reached America alive. Every morning, in the stuffy cabin where I lay (listening to the agonized cries of a Spanish baby on the other side of the partition, consumed with fever, poor mite, and screaming "Agua! Agua!" all the time), he used to appear, and carry me up the reeling stairs to the deck. Then, having tucked me up in my rugs, he fed me on cold ham and grapes, the only food I could swallow, and told me funny stories till I forgot all my woes.

I had one terrible fright on this journey. My mother wanted to have my hair cut, and, without realizing that I required any warning, led me into the presence of the black barber, the first coloured man I had ever seen. The shock of beholding a huge negro brandishing a pair



THE WARD MANSION, NEW YORK, 1833
(North-east corner of Broadway and Bond Street)

of sharp shears sent me into convulsions of fear. I was convinced that the awful scissor-man in "Struwelpeter," who cut off poor Johnny Suck-a-thumb's fingers, stood before me, and that he wanted not only my fingers but my head as well. His coaxing assurances that he would not hurt me sounded like the utterances of an ogre, and I had to be carried away kicking and screaming like a little wild cat, and landed in New York with my hair much longer than fashionable little girls were permitted to wear it in those days.

At last we reached New York, and for some reason Marion and I and our nurse were deposited for a time with my mother's bachelor uncles, John and Richard Ward, in their prim old house in Bond Street, still quite a fashionable quarter, although people were already beginning to move up town. My grandfather's house, a block or two away, was let to a dear old lady, Mrs. Wurts, who took pity on us and used to have us over there to spend the afternoon sometimes. There I found some gleams of sunshine—pretty things to look at—something to interest me; but in the uncles' grim establishment there was but one bright spot, the kitchen, where the great Irish cook gave us our meals and sometimes got up little surprises for us. Everything in that house was big—the uncles two gigantic men, Uncle John kind and smiling but mostly invisible, Uncle Richard dark and cross and dreadfully alarming! Our nursery was a vast bare room at the top of the house, and Uncle Richard had a bedroom communicating with it by one of those black closets now gone out of fashion—fortunately for children, who can no longer be shut up in them by hard-hearted nurses for hours at a time.

Once, when condemned to such penance, I found the other door of the prison ajar and peeped through—to shrink back in terror, for across the room I beheld Uncle Richard with his back to me, waving some awful-looking weapons round his head, as if preparing to brain the first person he met. Of course they were Indian clubs, but I could not know that, and thenceforth one more horrid apprehension clouded my life. I am afraid that Uncle Richard had not been a credit to the family, and dear Uncle John had hard work to make him appear so, although he made many sacrifices in the effort, refusing even to marry in order to devote himself entirely to the unsatisfactory brother who, in spite of all precautions, broke out now and then. I was very much puzzled by the difficulty Uncle Richard occasionally had in getting upstairs, and once followed him in great trembling, torn between my desire to help him find the way and my certainty that something dreadful would happen to me if I drew his attention to my presence.

Uncle John was away at the bank all day, and sometimes got so interested in affairs there that he forgot to come home at all. Then Elizabeth and her colleague, Bridget, would take charge of the house, get Mr. Richard to bed, look for robbers, and go round to lock up. One night when engaged in this duty they found what they had so long sought for. Sticking out from under the green baize cover of the dining-room table were the soles of two big muddy boots.

Finger on lip, the intrepid Irishwomen approached and examined these curiosities. Sounds of healthy snoring came from under the tablecloth.

"Sure, the villain's asleep," whispered Elizabeth. "Praise be! You're the stronger in the arms, and I'm

the stouter, Biddy! Catch hould o' them boots and pull 'um out, and I'll sit on his back while ye call the police!"

With all her might Biddy pulled, and the next moment the astonished intruder was pinned to the floor by Elizabeth's sixteen stone in the small of his back. He kicked and struggled, but Elizabeth sat like a rock till Bridget returned with the policeman, and the owner of "thim boots" was taken into custody.

A more wily thief drove up to the door one morning with a furniture waggon, and, ringing boldly, declared that Mr. Ward had sent him to take away the leather armchairs in the study, as they were to be upholstered anew. The nice, deep armchairs were carried out, piled in, and driven away, never to return. I believe it was some time before Uncle John discovered that they had been removed. He was very absent-minded, dear man, and my mother told me that for many years of her girlhood he presented her on her birthday with the same old walnut and silver inkstand off his writing-table, always setting it back in its place again, and renewing the ceremony with perfect gravity the next year. But when he brought his mind to bear on it he was a munificent giver, and all through my early girlhood used to send us large sums of money to spend as we liked. He had never been abroad until, two or three years after this, my mother induced him to come over and meet her in Paris, preparatory to spending a winter with us in Rome. Mamma persuaded him to buy some clothes in Paris, and to have proper shoes made for his huge feet; the New York footgear was too offensive to be borne. The boots were brought to the hotel, and Uncle John was delighted with them. Then the French

shoemaker produced a lumpy parcel, and held it out despairingly to my mother.

"For Heaven's sake, Madame," he prayed, "buy the lasts too! I had to have them made expressly, and never in this world shall I find another customer with such a foot!"

We spent a part of that summer in Newport, near my Aunt Julia's place, Oakglen, where many people were coming and going, and where one day Charles Sumner was reverently pointed out to me as a hero and a martyr of some great cause, then entirely beyond my comprehension. He was a tall, fine-looking man, but he struck me as morose and alarming; and I was not at all pleased at being dragged up to be presented to him. He was probably bored at being obliged to notice a spoilt child, and looked at me in a puzzled, disapproving manner which roused all my wrath. Finding that he had nothing interesting to say, I turned my back on him—even at that age I never forgave any one who bored me—and pondered long on the problem of his popularity in the house. From my Howe cousins I finally learnt that he was the friend of the noble and oppressed black people, and had been half murdered a few months before for espousing their cause; also that Aunt Julia nourished a tender regard for the slaves, and that she and Mr. Sumner and a number of other superior people intended to set them free and invite them to dinner. These would-be deliverers were called Abolitionists, the cousins said, and I must be an Abolitionist too! It took me some days to learn the ugly name—it sounded like a new crime out of Lancashire Mary's Old Testament—and then I boldly took the other side. With my recent fright at the black barber still in my mind, I vowed that I would run away

and starve rather than dine with anything that looked like him. I wondered how pretty Aunt Julia, with her blue eyes and red hair, could have such queer fancies; but Aunt Julia was always a puzzling person to me in those days, and, if the term does not sound too ridiculous as applied to the relations of a brilliantly intellectual woman and a very small ignorant girl, I would say that we did not hit it off!

I was supposed to look like her (though red hair was going out of fashion, and mine was daily combed with a heavy leaden comb to subdue its too bright tint), and once when her attention was called to this fact in my presence, she gave me a long searching look, and then turned away with an expression of amused disgust. She evidently did not consider the comparison a compliment, and it was a great many years before I forgave her.

Her friend and hero, Charles Sumner, was a really great man, in intellect, in heart, in principle, and had I met him when I was a little older, I should have been proud to have him notice me at all. He was an example of what a statesman should be, both in nobility of aim and dogged pursuance of the object in view. During the long political struggle which preceded the Civil War, Sumner, as early as 1848, when new States were being added to the Union, lifted up his eloquent voice in support of the maxim that "Congress had no more power to make a slave than to make a king," and that "there should be no more Slave States and no more Slave territory"; and for fourteen years he stood in the very forefront of the Free Soil party, an unflinching supporter of constitutional liberty. His zeal and prominence made him the chief target for the assaults of the Slavery party, which really received its own deathblow when Preston Brooks, coming

upon the Senator for Massachusetts from behind as he sat writing at his desk in the House, nearly clubbed him to death. Before that incident some compromise between North and South still appeared possible ; after it, when the slave-holders rose like one man to exalt Brooks and congratulate him on his cowardly deed, and Northerners of all parties agreed in their furious execration of it, feeling rose to such a pitch that war was inevitable sooner or later.

Sumner would perhaps have been more than human had he been able to put all personal rancour aside. A little of this betrayed itself when the war was over, and he so violently opposed Lincoln's patient and merciful project for reconstruction. The President would have pardoned and restored their constitutional rights to all who had been concerned in the rebellion, upon their taking the oath of allegiance to the United States. His Southern brethren were still brethren, much loved and deeply pitied, and his great heart desired to take them back with as little humiliation to them as possible. Charles Sumner, on the contrary, advocated political annihilation ; the vanquished were to lose all State rights until severe punishment should have been inflicted, and abject prayers for pardon should have followed it. The final decision leaned towards his view rather than towards that of the President, the Southern States being deprived of their rights until such time as Congress should see fit to restore them.

Sumner was great, Lincoln immeasurably greater ; yet how sadly do the heroisms and wisdoms of one epoch change aspect under the bitter experience of the next. Who that has in any way come in contact with the colour problem to-day does not regret that those who had to

deal with it then could not, or would not, undertake to settle it less precipitately? One looks with envy at the quiet record of the suppression of slavery in Brazil, where such a generous period of time could be devoted to it that it should more properly be called extinction than suppression. It was bondage dying a natural death under the wise regulations which prohibited further sale or barter, declared all unborn generations free, and, while protecting existing slaves in every possible way, as carefully avoided loss to their owners.

I suppose I must have been a little confused with the new surroundings, for I do not remember all the goings and comings of that first year in America, although places and people are as distinct in my mind as if I had seen them but yesterday. We seem to have floated constantly between New York, Newport, and Bordentown. One delightful week I spent in Baltimore, where my mother took me to see my godmother, Mrs. Latimer, a dear woman who was endlessly kind to me. Mrs. Latimer had some pretty old-fashioned ways, long forgotten in the North, but handed down in the South from Mary Washington's time. She used the most beautiful china and silver on her table, and none of the servants were permitted to handle it. I learnt to stand beside her after breakfast and hold the fine linen towels, while she, having donned a dainty apron, washed each precious object in a little tub of cedar wood bound with silver hoops. We never spoke during this important ceremony, and she had such a delicate way of touching the porcelain that it seemed as if her fingers were apologizing for using it at all.

The winter found us in New York, where I saw snow fall for the first time, and lie piled high in filthy heaps on

each side of the street, even as it so often does now, breeding disease, and producing upon me, then as now, the most despairing depression. The snow was a horror, the ice an enemy. I was always slipping down, and I have a painful, lively recollection of my chin coming in contact with the frozen pavement, while my cherished ermine muff rolled away before my eyes, growing blacker and wetter with every evolution. The cold seemed frightful, and my one consolation was to go and stand over the open register (radiators had not been invented), in the corner of the nursery, and thaw my shivering little limbs in the gusts of hot air which rushed up from it.

It was in New York that I saw the great comet which, every one said, foretold some terrible disaster. Several times we children were taken down into Bond Street at night, to gaze awe-stricken at the wide trail of fire which spanned all we could see of the sky between the house-tops. And it was in New York that I first saw the Aurora Borealis—a most exceptional phenomenon in that latitude. And what a glorious display it was! The entire firmament was fused in sheets of rose and orange and silver, that shot long tongues of icy light past the pale, shivering stars right up to the zenith, and descended again in showers of unearthly cold radiance, to be swept hither and thither in the whirl of winds we could only guess at, for on our earth the night was deathly still.

But before that wonderful vision was shown to me I had had one of the silent heartbreaks of childhood that grown-up people never realize or give a thought to. My father made a flying visit to America in the late summer of 1856, and came down for a day or two to the farm-house near Newport where we younger ones were placed while my mother went on a round of family visits. We



From a photograph after a miniature by kind permission of Mrs. Chanler

FAMILY GROUP

Mrs. Fraser's mother, her aunt Annie Mailliard, and her uncle Sam, as children

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had our governess and the dragon Mary, and were well looked after, but my heart was sore for my father, and when he came at last I thought he was going to stay with us. The day after his arrival he burst into our room in his old impetuous way, as if he had come for a game. "Goodbye, little May," he said; "I am going back to Rome." And as I clung to him, dazed, he picked up Marion off the floor and held him high above his head, laughing happily. The sun was shining right in his face, I remember, and Marion looked all a bundle of white and gold against the light.

The next moment my father was gone, and I never saw him again.

The happiest times we had in America were those we spent at Bordentown. My mother's younger sister, Annie, had married Adolphe Mailliard, a handsome and charming despot who at once captured my affections and made me the most willing of his subjects. He was a grandson of Joseph Bonaparte, erstwhile King of Spain, and, in spite of his bar sinister, was a much more typical Bonaparte than his easy-going grandsire or any of his contemporaries among the acknowledged scions of the house. He was born with the conviction that it was for him to rule, for all around him to obey; and he had such a quietly portentous way of signifying his pleasure that it would have required more than ordinary courage to oppose him. Very kindly and firmly he decided that while we were in America our home should be with him and our aunt, between whom and my mother there existed one of those ideal affections for which there seems to be no time in these later more hurried days. To each other they were "Beata" and "Benedetta," and if ever

the French expression "deux corps et une âme" described truthfully the relations of two human beings, it did so for theirs. They had been the youngest of the seven children left motherless when my Aunt Annie was born, and they had had only each other to confide in and seek comfort from during long years of neglected childhood.

Both were radiant at the temporary reunion, and Uncle Adolphe did all in his power to prolong it. In his princely way he added to his already large house a schoolroom for the elder girls and a model nursery for us. This was big enough to satisfy even me—I always detested small rooms—and had four great arched windows with steps in their alcoves, whence we could peep out over the safety bars and watch all the interesting sights below. There were the stables, full of beautiful, restless horses, the garden, the avenue, the steep hill where the happy "big ones" tobogganed on the snow; and far down at the end of the grounds, a railway line where the trains passed every day, a pleasant excitement, until we met with a terrible experience which coloured my dreams for years after. Mary, who hated the governess and refused to let us run loose with the elder children, was fond of taking Marion and me for our constitutional along the clean, hard railway track, where we could not soil our shoes or disarrange our clothes. The trains had been passing for months at the accustomed hours, and it never entered her British head that these could be altered. One bright morning we were sauntering across a long narrow bridge, just wide enough for the train itself and no more. On either side was the slight parapet, and below, the wide deep river.

When we reached the middle of the bridge we heard the shriek of a whistle behind us, and turned—to see the

volumes of smoke issuing from the funnel of an approaching engine. I looked up in my nurse's face; it was a sickly green. But she did not lose her head. Seizing Marion under one arm like a sack of flour, she grasped my hand, and we raced, tore, flew, on to the end of the bridge, the horrible thunder of the train already shaking it from side to side. Brakes were very elementary still, and the driver's horror must have been almost as great as ours. I thought we had been running for years—it was probably not more than a minute or two—when, sobbing and gasping, we reached the end, and all three rolled down the steep embankment just in time to escape the wheels of the engine as it roared by with a long train of cars behind it.

Night after night while we lived in Bordentown, and long after, I used to lie awake and tremble, hearing that train whistle at the end of the passage and then crash through the nursery door; but I had learnt to be dumb as to everything that happened under my tyrant's rule, and I never spoke of the experience till I was grown up. The beautiful sunny nursery in Bordentown soon held other terrors for me. When we had been put to bed at one end of it and the high gas-lights shut out with a screen, the cousins' nurse and mine would entertain each other for hours by relating or reading aloud the most frightful ghost stories—of which I took in every word. When the diversion was concluded, my nurse brought a lighted candle (a thing that Uncle Adolphe had forbidden her to use) close to my bedside, and peered into my face to see if I was asleep. If I stirred or opened my eyes I was instantly severely whipped, by way of calming my nerves. Whippings were inflicted on me day in, day out; but whatever happened, I was dumb. All the natural im-

pulsiveness of my nature was schooled to silent endurance, which so enraged the woman that she sometimes exclaimed, "You shall cry! I will make you cry!" That triumph she never had; but she succeeded in turning me into the most perfect little actress, the most consummate hypocrite that ever lived. I learnt to simulate sleep so as to deceive even her; I smiled when I was miserable, ate when food choked me, obeyed with joyful alacrity, and pretended to like all the tasks she laid upon me—tasks which she should have performed herself. As I believed she was the most powerful person in the house, and would flay me if I complained of her, nobody ever suspected that anything was wrong; and in the family records of the time I have since found much laudation of Mary's splendid management of me and of her success with my training. Indeed she made me a most convenient child, always obedient, always smiling. Even when, a year or so later, her ignorance and unkindness brought me to the point of death, I said no word which could inculpate her. I was too deadly frightened of the consequences.

These are all very uninteresting details, but I have written them down in the hope of saving some unfortunate little child from the sufferings I had to undergo. Poor Lancashire Mary I forgave even then, and I trust that her sins against me have long ago been overlooked by the Recording Angel. But there are many like her in this world, and I would adjure all heads of families, as they value their children's souls and bodies, never to put complete trust in any dependent, however plausible and apparently satisfactory that dependent may be. In dealing with children, more than in any other relation in the world, "une erreur est pire qu'un crime."

CHAPTER VIII

STORIES AND TRADITIONS OF THE BONAPARTES

Bordentown—"Joseph"—His first-hand impressions of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien—Fouché junior—The Palazzo Bonaparte and Cardinal Lucien—The adventure of the three Bonapartes—"Madame Mère"—Her last sight of the Emperor—May 5th, 1821—Napoleon and the Holy Father—The little girl and her catechism—Oliveto and the "last of the soldiers of Napoleon"—The relics of the Young Pretender—A fright in the chapel—The haunted bell.

THERE was one person at Bordentown who interested me even more than my aunt's husband, and this was her father-in-law. He was a very quiet, stately old gentleman, not nearly as tall as his handsome son; he had a beautiful aquiline nose and very piercing black eyes, and whenever I saw him, he was dressed with extreme care, in black frock-coat, black tie, with some jewel in his stiff shirt-front, and he always carried or wore a top hat and a gold-headed cane. I have a distinct recollection of sitting on the edge of a chair opposite him, taking in every detail of his appearance and costume, while he looked me over with equally grave scrutiny, resting his very white hands on the end of his cane. Great respect was shown to him in the family, and I felt much honoured at being the object of his notice for the time.

He did not live with us, but came out from a beautiful villa which he inhabited at a little distance, and which was the property of a mysterious person called "Joseph"

—pronounced in French fashion—and often alluded to *sotto voce*. Whether this person were alive or dead, I did not know, but there was no doubt about his importance. Everything connected with my uncle's father and the great park where we were allowed to play was invested with a mournful grandeur which strongly appealed to me. He and it seemed set apart from the everyday life around, and my vivid imagination decided that my old gentleman was some great and unfortunate person who chose to be known by the unassuming name of Monsieur Mailliard.

Yet that was the only name he had a right to bear, being the illegitimate but much loved son of the brother whom Napoleon had set, first on the throne of Naples and then on that of Spain. He was born in France, I think in Paris, had accompanied his parent in many journeys and adventures, and was acting as his page at the critical moment when Napoleon, having caused the Duc d'Enghien to be kidnapped in Germany, was deciding the fate of that unfortunate young man. Monsieur Mailliard's recollections were limited to his personal experiences, but they added a great weight of testimony to Napoleon's responsibility for the affair and the almost hysterical eagerness with which he prepared his own exoneration from the odium which must attach to it. In order to make the story comprehensible certain facts should be recalled before relating it.

In 1804 Napoleon, then First Consul, was much disturbed by the unceasing efforts of the Royalists to restore the Bourbons to power. Fouché, the Chief of Police, had fallen into disgrace, and Napoleon had replaced him by Réal, in whom he felt much confidence. Fouché, determined to be reinstated, left no stone unturned to

gain his point; and finally, through his complete and extended system of espionage, was able to bring his old master a very startling piece of news, early in March 1804. Presenting himself boldly at Malmaison, he asked for an interview and went straight to the point.

"You think you know where Pichegru is, do you not?" he said bluntly.

"Of course I know," the other answered. "He is in London," and taking up a memorandum he consulted it for a moment. "On the 17th of February Pichegru dined with the Regent at Kensington Palace," he continued. "He is in London at this moment."

"He is not," Fouché replied. "Pichegru is in Paris, intriguing with the Royalists."

He then produced his proofs for the statement, and seeing that he had made a profound impression on the First Consul proffered a piece of advice. "The most dangerous Bourbon just now is the Duc d'Enghien. You ought to have him in custody. Why do you not bring him to Paris?"

"How am I to do that?" Napoleon replied. "He is living in Ettenheim, across the German frontier."

"There has been something like mutiny among your cuirassier regiments on the frontier," said Fouché. "What more simple than to send a Commission to inquire into it? Ettenheim is only about fifteen miles farther. Tell whoever you send to rush a few men into the town one night and fetch the young man into France."

The advice was too timely to be neglected. A certain Colonel was deputed to investigate the disturbances among the frontier garrisons. One dark night, with some five-and-twenty followers and an empty carriage, he rode

into the little sleeping town (all unprepared for such a raid), surrounded a small two-storeyed house half-way up its steep main street, brought out the Duc d'Enghien with his secretary and his dog, both of whom refused to be separated from him, hustled the captives into the carriage, and dashed back across the frontier again before any one in authority had found out what was going on. The secretary was cast out and left behind a few hours later; the Prince—and the dog—were brought to Paris as rapidly as possible and lodged in the fortress of Vincennes, where Madame Harel, the wife of the Governor, was exceedingly kind to them both. This was on the afternoon of the 19th of March. The fact of the arrest had already been known to the Consular circle for a day or two, causing great excitement. On the morning of the 19th Joseph Bonaparte, profoundly disturbed, had hastened to Malmaison to ascertain his brother's intentions regarding the Prince. (Young Mailliard did not accompany him on this visit. His experiences were confined to the evening of that fatal day.) When Joseph reached Malmaison he was shown into the drawing-room, where he found Josephine standing at one of the long windows in great agitation.

"Do you see?" she cried, pointing to where Napoleon was walking up and down on the lawn in earnest conversation with Talleyrand. "He is there, and that dreadful little cripple is with him! He gives him no peace—and I am frightened, frightened—in my soul! Go to him! In God's name, go to him, and get him away from the cripple!"

Joseph obeyed; and when he appeared on the lawn, Talleyrand withdrew. Napoleon made no secret of the subject of the recent conversation; he was convinced that

the Duc d'Enghien was conspiring against himself and the Republic, and Joseph understood that the Prince's doom was already decided upon. Long and earnestly he pleaded in the young man's favour, representing how much more Napoleon would gain from magnanimity than from severity. He reminded his brother of the kindness which the old Prince de Condé, the Duke's grandfather, had shown to him when he, a poor and unknown youth, was struggling with adversity and depression at the military school at Brienne; how the Prince had encouraged him to persevere, and had prophesied that he would overcome all obstacles and make a great name for himself in the end. Then Napoleon yielded, in appearance, perhaps in reality, for his imagination and his vanity were touched for the moment.

"Yes, I will do it!" he declared. "I will spare him—I will make him my aide-de-camp! I can afford to do it! A Condé for my aide-de-camp—that is worth having!"

Overjoyed at his success, Joseph returned to Rambouillet, where a number of guests were awaiting him for dinner—Madame de Staël among others. He at once announced the good news; and great was the rejoicing over it. The health of the great, generous-hearted First Consul was enthusiastically drunk, and then that of his new aide-de-camp. All was well, and a great weight lifted off people's minds.

Dinners ended early in those days, and the guests had departed, when a late visitor arrived in haste. Napoleon had come to tell Joseph that he had changed his mind. Young Mailliard was acting as his father's page, and curiosity evidently got the better of discipline, for from his post outside the door he overheard a great part of

the interview. It was stormy in the extreme. Joseph raged, reproached, implored—all to no purpose. Napoleon (who appears to have been speaking sincerely for the only time in the whole course of the affair) vowed that leniency would be fatal to the country and to himself; the Prince must die. It seems that he had enough regard for his brother to desire to convince him of the necessity of the sentence before it should be put into effect. He had evidently told no one of his purpose, for the rest of the persons concerned knew nothing of where he spent that evening. Obdurate to all Joseph's entreaties and arguments, he finally withdrew, emerging from the room alone, but pausing outside the closed door to tell the page that his brother was worn out, and would at once retire to rest; and that, *whatever happened*, he was on no account to be disturbed before the morning.

Some two or three hours later, a messenger arrived bringing a letter for Joseph; but the First Consul's orders had been precise, and no one had the hardihood to disobey them. When Joseph the next morning read these words: "My brother, you are right. I give you this young man's life," the Duc d'Enghien was lying on his face with three bullets in his body, in the ditch of Vincennes; and the earth was already stamped down and smoothed over his grave, which had been dug for him before he arrived in Paris.

While his mock trial was going on all Paris was dancing at the house of Talleyrand, who gave that evening a ball so brilliant that it was for a long time the talk of the town. One very important person, Murat, the Governor of the city, had failed to take advantage of the hospitality so astutely extended in order to draw attention from the arrival of the illustrious

prisoner, and gather within four safe walls the various authorities who might have made inquiries inconvenient to the host.

Murat was unwell—very conveniently so, as it happened, since he was at home when General Savary arrived with Napoleon's letter[1]—of the three which the great man wrote that night the only one intended to bear fruit. His command to Réal, the Chief of Police, to attend the Duke's trial, was issued merely to give some appearance of legality to the proceedings.

Murat was in a very difficult situation. The post he occupied was the first Napoleon had consented to give him since 1798, when Murat, having been ordered to lead a cavalry charge in Egypt, had failed in his duty, and Napoleon had severely reprimanded him for what he called his cowardice. For some years he was in disgrace; Napoleon ignored him persistently. Then Murat sought out Madame Bonaparte and her pretty daughter Caroline. I think they were living at Valence at the time. He made love to Caroline, and succeeded in gaining her affections, as well as the good-will of her mother; and the young people became engaged. Thus armed, Murat returned to Paris; and Napoleon, always soft-hearted where his sisters were concerned, consented to the marriage, which took place, if I am not mistaken, a little more than a year before the events I have been relating. For Caroline's sake more than for his own, Murat obtained the Governorship of Paris; but he was on probation; and it would have required far higher courage and principle than he possessed to court a second downfall by any hesitation in carrying out the orders of his all-powerful brother-in-law.

[1] See Note, p. 615: "The Case of the Duc d'Enghien."

He was, apparently, the only person who received direct written instructions from the First Consul that night; and he never betrayed the sinister confidence reposed in him. Had he strayed from the safe path for one moment he would have been at once disavowed and dismissed, as was Count Réal, the next morning, when Napoleon, on being informed of his victim's execution, crowned his histrionic successes by an exhibition of the most uncontrollable rage and distress. Réal, publicly dismissed with the loudest obloquy, was privately compensated with a large sum of money, which he carried away to America. He came to New Jersey—the little State which was so singularly distinguished by Imperialist preference at one time, and which is now the forcing house of anarchy for Europe—bought property, and built a beautiful villa, where he lived to a good old age; and where, I believe, he often compared notes with Joseph Mailliard, my great-uncle by marriage.

His post as Chief of Police in Paris was filled within the hour by the triumphant Fouché, a genius much more in sympathy with Napoleon's methods than the honest Réal. My husband fell in with Fouché junior at Stockholm;[1] he said that the likeness between father and son was the most striking he had ever seen. The physiognomy was, unique, remarkably, almost exquisitely delicate—a high, ideal brow, features of patrician fineness, a mouth and chin that might have belonged to a frail, pretty woman, a complexion like painted porcelain, and the strangest eyes in the world, deep blue, with very white, very drooping lids.

When I was a growing girl in Rome—long after all

[1] Paul Fouché, born 1801. He was domiciled in Sweden. His son was A.D.C. to the King, Charles XV.

the great figures of the First Empire had passed away—one of my favourite haunts was the Palazzo Bonaparte, the great house which is the last on the Corso and the first in Piazza di Venezia. The owner, Cardinal Lucien Bonaparte, lived on the first floor, and rented the second to my godfather, Mr. Hooker; and I was fond of roaming through the vast rooms and calling up pictures of Madame Letitia, as she was usually called, Napoleon's mother, who spent her last years and died in this house. We had several objects that had belonged to her, among others a Sèvres dessert service which my father bought at the sale of her effects. Every plate was painted with a different pattern, and each was prettier than the last. There was a "bout de chaise" too, one of those all but legless armchairs on which our grandmothers liked to rest their pretty, sandalled feet—a most comfortable bit of furniture which I carried round the world with me for a long time; and once when I was hunting for a stand for a hanging screen, I was lucky enough to find a real Imperial Eagle, with "N" on its breast, on a tall gilt pole—a ghostly little relic of departed grandeur which I at once adapted to my own purposes.

Cardinal Lucien had the reputation of possessing the family temper in its least controllable form; and I knew that he lived chiefly on strong black coffee, which is scarcely a sedative to nerves upset by impertinent questions. Had it not been for these facts I would have asked him to tell me a little more about a youthful scrape of his, in which my uncle Adolphe acted as his only too sympathetic guardian angel.

There was another Bonaparte in the adventure—I think a brother of Lucien's. The two young men were in Florence, enjoying all the gaieties of a particularly

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cheerful winter season, when my uncle, who was also amusing himself in Italy, received a mysterious summons to join them at once. (I had better say that the family had always overlooked Monsieur Mailliard's disqualifications, and broad-mindedly accepted him as one of themselves.) My uncle posted to Florence at full speed, and, obeying his instructions, went to the house where his relatives were staying, under cover of the night, and taking care to let none of his acquaintance in the town know of his arrival.

When the conspirators met, Adolphe was informed that two unpleasant things had happened: one of the young gentlemen (not Lucien) had got tangled up with a lady from whom he was sure he had better run away; and both appeared to be "wanted." They were shadowed night and day by spies, whom they took to be emissaries of the Bourbons, lately restored to power, and who might certainly have had reasons of their own for keeping an eye on two good-looking scions of the hostile house—boys who were open favourites of the Tuscan Sovereigns, and might make trouble by attracting supporters to their cause. Also, if I remember my uncle's story rightly, they suspected the lady and her family of collusion with the haunting spies. Altogether, they were feeling very uncomfortable—Adolphe must take them to America at once!

Adolphe was a little staggered at the proposition. These cousins of his had relations and guardians who, by all rules governing illustrious houses, should be consulted before the two Princes left Europe. But they were, as my uncle put it when he told the story, "frightened to death," and I do not imagine that he put forward any very conclusive arguments against the scheme,

for he was quite as young and almost as reckless as they. Very soon a delightfully romantic plot was concocted: Adolphe was to go to Leghorn the next morning, find a vessel sailing for America with a captain who would ask no questions; and when the passage was arranged for, he would return to Florence and spirit the young men away in disguise! With true dramatic instinct the night of a great ball at Court was chosen for the escape; Adolphe would have a carriage waiting and disguises prepared, the heroes would dance to the last moment, kiss their hands to the great world, leap into the carriage, tear off their beautiful clothes and many decorations, hastily assume the Mailliard livery, and accompany the faithful Adolphe as his lackeys in a wild night drive towards the coast!

The strange thing is that it all came off. How those romantic young hearts beat that night when they left the palace, breathing what they firmly believed was a long farewell to earthly greatness! Adolphe was waiting with the carriage round a dark corner; the cousins, eluding observation, wrenched open the door, jumped in—there was a dash for the city gates, a palpitating moment when the guard wanted to know who they were, and where they were going in such a hurry at that time of night? Then Adolphe produced something which in the lantern light did duty for passports for three honest American citizens travelling with their consul's approval. The guard relented, the carriage rolled under the deep archway of the Porta a Mare, and a day or two later the fugitives were safe and seasick in the chops of the Mediterranean.

Their disappearance caused a good deal of excitement at the time, but they were too far away to really enjoy it. And I believe that they did not find much romance in the

Bordentown air, in spite of its being so impregnated with Bonaparte traditions. I do not know precisely how long they remained in America, but they returned to Europe in a short time; and Lucien, at any rate, sobered down, entered the Church, and was a much respected if irascible prelate when I was a little girl. He kept a warm spot in his heart for his compatriots, however. A sorely tried French governess of ours used to go and see him whenever the conflicting elements in our rather erratic family were too much for her, and she always returned soothed and comforted, and less dreadfully strict about the irregular verbs. What a terror those were to children! My own little boy, when he was seven years old, being asked by his teacher a question in geography, "What separates England from France?" replied with mournful conviction, "The irregular verbs!"

I always wished that I had been born soon enough to see Madame Letitia or, as she was generally known by tradition to us, "Madame Mère," when she was living in the old house I afterwards knew so well. It was bought for her when, in the heyday of Napoleon's glory, she came to live in Rome, then merely a French provincial city, the capital of a department of France.

Madame Mère took little or no part in the promotion of her sons and daughters to the thrones of principalities and dominions by their brother; indeed I think that, at heart, she was hardly in sympathy with such revolutionary and, in the case of Rome, anti-Papal splendours. She was a sincerely religious woman, and, had it been in her power, it is quite certain that she would have prevented such aggressions. Her feeling about it was that it was more or less a direct flouting of an all-powerful Providence which would sooner or later reassert

Itself. Her devotion to the greatest of her sons was severely tried by his treatment of the Papacy, and it was with something of long-expectant resignation to the justice of Heaven that she took her last farewell—as she thought at the time—of Napoleon, on his embarking for St. Helena, in the few words which passed between them—the French "Adieu, ma mère" of the Emperor, in answer to which his mother's Italian "Addio, figlio mio," rings through the ages with a quality almost of reproof, tender and melancholy; a reminder, as it were, of other days and of things that might have been.

It was nearly six years after that last parting of theirs that Madame Mère was sitting in the drawing-room of Palazzo Bonaparte, on the morning of May 5, 1821; downstairs, at the same time, the hall-porter found himself confronted by a stranger, a man in a voluminous cloak and hat drawn low down on his features, who was inquiring for "la Signora Madre," saying that he must see her at once, as he brought her news of her son, the exiled Emperor, from St. Helena. The porter, on learning this, led him to the door of the "Piano Nobile" (the first floor), occupied by Madame Mère, and there handed him over, with a word as to his mission, to a servant, who at once departed to inform the old lady that a man called to bring her news of the Emperor.

Instantly she gave orders for the stranger's admission to her presence. On making his appearance, he kept his cloak still somewhat over his face—rather to her surprise—and remained silent until they were alone, when, lowering the cloak, he revealed himself. It was none other than Napoleon himself. Madame Mère, carried out of herself at the unexpected sight, uttered a cry of wonderment, half of incredulous joy, half of apprehension for his

safety. In a flash of memory, the occasion of his last escape came back to her—the day of his flight from Elba in 1815—and she took it for granted that he had contrived a similar escape from St. Helena, and had presented himself thus to her to ask for a temporary shelter on his way to some rendezvous in France.

But the awful chill of a contact with other than human forces fell upon her, when, for all answer to her cry of greeting, the man before her, regarding her with an air of poignant solemnity, spoke these words : " May the fifth, eighteen hundred and twenty-one—to-day ! " His tone was of such tremendous significance that it paralyzed her intelligence beneath a load of irrevocable finality. As she gazed at him, he stepped slowly backwards and retreated through the open door behind him, letting fall the heavy *portière* as he did so.

Recovering her self-control, Madame Mère rushed from the drawing-room into the apartment beyond. It was empty, and she hastened out into the *sala* or anteroom, where a servant was sitting at the door according to custom.

" Where is the gentleman ? " she cried.

" Eccellentissima Signora Madre," replied the man. " No one passed through since I conducted him to your Excellency. And I have not left this place for a moment."

Sick at heart, Madame Mère withdrew. For two months (oh the heart-breaking delays of those deliberate times!) the affair remained a mystery. Then, some time in July, Madame Mère learnt the truth that she had suspected from the first. On the 5th of May Napoleon's liberation had come. He had escaped from his prison by the death to which he had so long looked forward.

Of all Heaven's gifts to him, I think those closing years of solitude and reflection were the most signal. Madame Mère's early lessons bore their late, ripe fruit, in repentance, in faith, in gentle kindness to such as would receive it.

It is true that, in regard to such a flagrant offence as the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, the great man refused to acknowledge his culpability, saying, "It was necessary; I should do it again," thus separating political from personal morality; but he did not take this view of the injuries inflicted on the Church and the Vicar of Christ. These lay heavy on his conscience. He had overstepped the limits of human jurisdiction, and this, not from what he could represent to himself as a national necessity, but at the dictates of private ambitions and private vanity. His efforts during his last years, to make amends, so far as his rigorous captivity permitted, were touching in their thoroughness. The author of the "Catecismo en Ejemplos" (an admirable book which has now, I believe, been translated into English) tells of a very holy lady who was attended on her deathbed by a certain bishop. He was deeply impressed by her profound knowledge of religion, and much edified by the way in which she had made her life conform to its teachings.

"Where did you learn your faith, my daughter?" he inquired.

"Ah," she replied. "When I was a little child, I lived at St. Helena. The Emperor spoke to me one day, and asked me what I knew of my catechism. He was not satisfied with my answers, and he said that he would instruct me himself. For years he made me come to him every day, and he patiently taught me, for hours

at a time. I owe my knowledge of religion, all my faith and joy in it, to him."

One more picture of Napoleon comes back to me as I write—one characteristic of a far earlier phase in his career. I had gone to spend a month with some friends in the more remote fastnesses of the Sabines. Their castle was called Oliveto, the huge stronghold of an ancient family — a fortress, a palace, a dungeon, all in one. It lay far back among the mountains, on its one great rock that rose up from a sea of tossing chestnut woods; its vassal village fawned black around its foot; the big parish church was well within the defence of its massive walls. The family rarely visited the place, which accounted for its dilapidated condition, and great excitement was caused in the village by our arrival. Young and old turned out to have a look at us, and pay their respects, the first time we showed ourselves.

"Who is that?" I asked, pointing to a queer little old man, wizened and shrunken beyond all imagination, but who was standing to attention and holding up his hand in something like a military salute. There was the most mischievous twinkle in his still bright eyes, and an expression of whimsical superiority on his brown wrinkled face.

"Come here, Alessandro," said my host, "and tell the young lady how old you are!"

"'Llustrissimo sor Marchese," replied the queer little fellow in a voice so thin and cracked that it seemed to come from beyond the grave. "Nobody but the good God knows how old I am, and He has forgotten, otherwise He would have taken me to Paradise long ago! How old? More than a hundred years—perhaps two—what do I know? You see, I was a soldier of Napoleon, and they say I am the only one left."

"You served under Napoleon?" I cried. "Tell me about him! Did you ever see him?"

"Only once, my beautiful Excellency; that was quite enough, for he was a terrible young man. It was in a place far away—a flat place, with many white tents in rows and a broad space down the middle. He came walking with others behind him. He was not much taller than me. He had a green coat—he looked cross—he had a countenance that made one fear. He did not speak to the great lords that were with him. I was *sentinella*—I stood very still, for I was frightened. But"—and the cracked voice rose in a little squeal of triumph—"I deserted *three times!*"

"You deserted!" I exclaimed. "Then how is it that you are alive? Why didn't they shoot you?"

Alessandro laid his finger to his nose and winked knowingly.

"They could not spare me!" he chuckled. "They wanted us all—every one! Oh, they caught me twice and brought me back. The first time they asked me why I had run away. 'Signori miei,' I said, 'I do not like being a soldier. Is it for a man of sense to march with a pack on his back till he is ready to drop? To be hungry and thirsty when he can have plenty to eat and drink at home? To stand up and be shot at when he does not want to die? No, Signori miei, I beseech you to let me go back to my own *castello*.' They said it was a great honour to be a soldier, and they would not let me go, but made me work harder than ever. So, soon afterwards, I ran away again. Oh, that time they were very angry with me! They brought me into a large room where there were many most splendid generals sitting on both sides of a long table. They had plumes on their

hats. They looked very severe. One of them said, 'You have done an evil thing—a most wicked thing! You have dared to desert from the army of NAPOLEON!' And when he said that name they all stood up and took off their hats—you would have thought they were saluting the Blessed Sacrament! Oh, I could have laughed, though I was dreadfully afraid that they were going to shoot me. But they did not—and I ran away again directly—and that time they did not catch me, and I got home!" And once more Alessandro chuckled at the remembrance of his misdeeds.

He did not know—never had known—anything more about the scenes of his experiences. "Far from here—far from here," was all that he could tell me. Oliveto was the centre and boundary of his world. All beyond that was a trackless waste from which he had managed to find his way back, scared and homesick, to the safe, forgotten, mountain town where he was born.

It certainly was one of the strangest places I ever was in; so absolutely feudal still that I am sure, had the "'Llustrissimo sor Marchese" chosen to condemn any of the inhabitants to death, his mandate would have been submissively carried out. There were only two persons who could read and write—the priest and the apothecary; and these two used to come up every evening and sit with us, and play billiards on a moth-eaten old table in the hall which had to serve as a sitting-room. Nothing could surpass the beauty of our outer world; the Apennines, among the higher hills, are so broken, so tossed, yet so divinely clothed with oak and chestnut forests, that one seems to be living in a softly moving sea of verdure, touched here and there in the crystal freshness of that October weather to flaming orange and scarlet.

But indoors it was grim beyond expression. Had I not been young and light-hearted, I doubt whether I should have held out long against its haunted atmosphere.

I do not know how many rooms there were on the one floor that was habitable for the family. I and my friend, the daughter of the house, had four or five to ourselves—great, empty, marble-floored apartments hung with hand-painted Indian chintzes that flapped and shivered as the October winds whistled round the outer walls and screamed through the loopholed towers overhead, which we never had the courage to visit. When we looked down from the windows we seemed to be miles from the lower world. The room where we slept together for company contained relics of the Young Pretender—a thistle framed under glass with an inscription setting forth that it had sprung up in a single night between the stones of the Doria's chapel at Albano where he used to kneel, and one or two other devout and ghastly reminiscences of that pious Prince. The whole place seemed crowded with ghosts; we thought they beckoned to us from the tattered hangings of state beds, crowned with mouldy feathers that waved and nodded as we scurried past the open doors of a score of uninhabited rooms, to say our prayers in the balcony oratory which looked from high up in the wall down into the church. One night we were a little late in performing our devotions; we had had to feel our way in complete darkness along the endless passages to the two heavily padded doors which shut off the eyrie of prayer from the inner house. By the time we had passed these and got down on our knees on the worn old prie-dieus we felt like two young heroines destined to be saints. The church below was a well of blackness, with just the one light

burning before the Tabernacle. We gazed down into it—and had barely crossed ourselves when we sprank to our feet with a shriek. Two little blue lights, egg-shaped, unearthly, were dancing over the dank pavement, settling here, floating there, rising, falling!

We never knew how we got back to our rooms. Some merciful power saved us from breaking our heads in the dark, for never did two girls race as we did that night. Heroism, saintliness—these were left behind. All we wanted was to get out of reach of those dreadful corpse lights—natural enough emanations from the crypt below, where every deceased inhabitant of the village had been buried since time immemorial.

There was not a bell in the whole house, nor in the town, except the one kept in the sacristy for the acolyte to ring during Mass. When something was needed upstairs from the cavernous kitchens below, the word was passed from mouth to mouth—as people pass buckets in a conflagration—and in time the order was complied with. We girls had grumbled at the inconvenience, and said once laughingly that we would like to confiscate the bell from the church. But we never said so again. That night it paid us a visit. Towards two o'clock we both woke with a start and sat up to listen to a loud clear tinkle outside the window. Without a change in its note it moved round to the next, then to the next, ringing persistently and clamorously, sixty or seventy feet from the ground. Then it moved away, and as we clung to each other frozen with fear, we heard it go all round the castle, getting fainter and fainter, then louder again till it was once more at our own windows, ringing madly as if intent on getting through the shutters into the room. Three times it floated round the building, always pausing when

it reached our room—then it ceased suddenly and we heard no more.

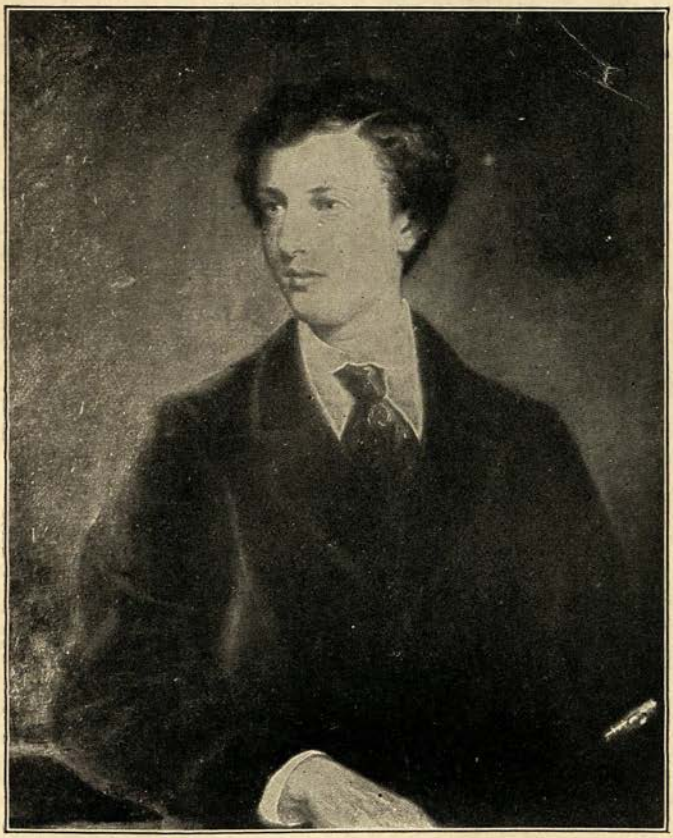
The next day we made frantic inquiries in the desire to convince ourselves, against all the testimony of our senses, that some one had played a trick on us, but to no purpose. The bell had been safely locked up in the sacristy, and the key of that and of the church were kept by the priest, who found everything in order in the morning. The elders had slept through the strange visitation, but the servants had all heard it, and they had been as frightened as we were. I think they connected it with the "Vecchio Marchese," an imperious tyrant who had ruled the place some eighty years earlier, and of whose strange whims and violent outbreaks the villagers still spoke under their breath. But we two knew better! The little church bell had punished us for our audacity in proposing to put it to common domestic uses!

CHAPTER IX

FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD

Marion—"The month of great men"—I take his education in hand—Mademoiselle and mechanics—A child's self-discipline—St. Paul's School—Marion finds his voice—His return to Siena—Essex—"The Tale of a Lonely Parish"—A disastrous experience—Pig-driving and its consequences—His extraordinary strength—The "mercante di fave"—The adventure in the hills—An unearthly illumination—The swimmer—His sailors' candles to St. Antonino—An escape from a shark—At Cambridge—"Immense"—Return to Rome—His introduction to Sanskrit—India—"Mr. Isaacs"—Mr. Morley's appreciation—A specialist and an historian—"Thoroughness"—His own architect—The Sorrento Villa—His religion—His devotion—"Good Friday."

SINCE my beloved brother passed away, so many mistaken accounts of his childhood and youth have been published that I am sure his numberless friends, known and unknown, will be grateful if, at this point in my record, I devote a chapter to him. As I said before, he was born at the Bagni di Lucca in Tuscany, on August 2, 1854 (not 1845, as generally stated), and was welcomed with enthusiastic delight by my parents, who, in spite of their tender affection for the three little daughters, ardently desired a son. He was named (as one child in each branch of the family has usually been) after an ancestor of the Revolution, Francis Marion. From the first he gave promise of unusual strength and beauty, and, as time went on, of a character equal in power and harmony to the perfection of his physical



From a painting by L. Terry

F. MARION CRAWFORD

organization. Very happy stars presided over his birth; in later years, when he had amused himself with rather profound occult studies, he used to say that he owed much to having begun life in the royal heyday of summer, when all things in nature were at their fullest tide of exuberant vitality, when the grapes were ripening hot and heavy in the sun, the grain already golden for the harvest, the pomegranate in scarlet blossom, and the branches of the fig-tree weighed down with their honey-sweet fruit; and he quoted name after name, from Julius Cæsar to Napoleon, to prove that, of all months in the year, August was the richest in birthdays of great men.

Yet his intellect developed slowly and along the most leisurely lines, so that I, his senior by three of childhood's long, long years, became very depressed about it when I was six years old. My mother was absent nearly a year, being first absorbed in nursing my father through his last lingering illness, and then in the thousand details of business which devolved upon her after his death. We children were in Bordentown, and Marion and I were left much to ourselves, my sisters being altogether in charge of the governess. Our nurse was a hard-headed, uneducated woman to whom I would never have dreamed of turning for advice; with rather a heavy heart I prepared to undertake my brother's education alone. I was an avid reader by that time, and wanted a companion in my joys, but what I felt most deeply was the indifference of the stupid grown-ups to Marion's mental condition. Nobody seemed to understand or give a thought to it; and I was convinced that, unless something were done at once, he would grow up a hopeless dunce!

Poor baby, he was less than three years old, and

regarded my cherished books as the finest kind of bricks to build houses with. In vain I tried to even make him look at the pictures. The volume would be pitched across the room in joyous disdain, and his laugh would follow me as I meekly went to pick it up. I was at my little wits' end when some one brought into the nursery a flaring circus poster three or four yards long printed in huge red and black letters. Here was what I had been looking for! I spread the crackling sheet on the floor, and day after day Marion and I crept over it on all fours, till he had learnt to scramble to the letter I named and roll over on it with a little yell of triumph. The elders watched us sometimes and laughed at the new game, never dreaming of the earnest purpose in the back of my small head. But either I was a very poor teacher or my beautiful brother was a slow pupil; it took me five whole years to accomplish my task and put him in possession of the "world full of books," the precious inheritance which had become mine a year before I began his education. Whether from indifference to my object or approval of my methods, I cannot say, but no one ever offered to help me, nor would I have permitted such interference. Very likely my wise elders saw that Marion should not be hurried, that a child with such an astonishing physique should not be educationally forced.

When he was seven years old I passed him on to professional instruction, and he leapt beyond me in a day and left me far behind, reaching out to learning with an avidity his teachers could hardly satisfy. History, languages, classics, science, mechanics—his brain absorbed and assimilated knowledge as its natural food. My mother was alarmed; the "thoroughness" she worshipped and so faithfully translated in her own life made her fear

above all things the talents she designated as "fatal facilities." Constantly she warned us all against our manifest dangers in that direction, and urged us to specialize, to concentrate all our bubbling mental energies on one or two great points, and not to be led astray by the pleasure and ease with which we could master a dozen subjects at a time. For the rest of us she was right perhaps, but she was mistaken about Marion. The gifts we girls had inherited were but pale rushlights compared to the flame of intellect which burned in his brain. With that always comes the strong instinct of self-preservation, and my brother stubbornly, if half-unconsciously, refused to be bound down too early to any definite plan for his future. Meanwhile he was laying very solid foundations. A tutor was provided for him, and, in accordance with Roman custom, conducted his chief studies in Latin, so that it became a living language to the boy, a benefit for which he constantly declared in later years that he could never be grateful enough.

At the same time a Parisian lady who had a veritable genius for teaching, and who "gave" us all her perfect French till it became as much our language as Italian or English, devoted herself to that side of his instruction. My mother, whose favourite language was German, provided him with a German teacher, who daily claimed her quota of his time. All this sounds very strenuous for a child of nine years old, but it must be remembered that Marion's was an exceptional case. The studies with the Latin tutor (who vowed that he had never had such a pupil) were the only ones which he looked upon as work; all the rest he played with, and the only trouble he experienced over his modern languages was the fearful jealousy which sprang up between Mademoiselle Guillot,

the voluble, amusing Frenchwoman, and Fräulein Pehmler, a deeply sentimental, gushing German. Both warm-hearted spinsters with a wealth of stored affections to bestow, the child, with his almost regal beauty and ardent intellect, became for each the centre of life, and fierce were the battles which raged between them, not always conducted on the most honest lines.

"Allons, mon petit," Mademoiselle would say, "don't worry yourself about those German exercises! It is a hideous language, only fit for their own ugly mouths!" (Mademoiselle was a remarkably handsome woman.) "It will spoil your pronunciation for French, the only language in which refined people can properly express their ideas."

Fräulein Pehmler was equally fierce and unscrupulous. "Na! Diese Französin!" she would exclaim. "She takes up too much of your time, mein Kind! What is there in her so frivolous literature to compare with the high and glorious thoughts of the German poets? Put it all out of your head. It will be of no use to you who are destined for great things."

Fortunately both these good ladies were highly educated, and since their rivalry made them strain every nerve to outdo each other in rendering the lessons pleasant and profitable to their pupil, it turned to his ultimate advantage, and no harm was done.

Mademoiselle finally scored a signal victory by wisely encouraging his love for mechanics. Like many boys, he was in love with steam-engines, and she took some trouble to procure models and books on machinery for him, and allowed all his French compositions to turn on the subject. Among my mother's most treasured possessions was a sheaf of copy-books, each describing a different model of

locomotive in faultless technical French, and illustrated by carefully drawn designs. The subject interested him all his life, and a section of his library in Sorrento was devoted to it. It was during these years that my mother read with him many portions of the Bible ; its glorious imagery fired his imagination, and its noble English became the model which he set before him for his literary work, when, long years afterwards, his vocation was made plain to him. He used to say that the Bible, Ossian, and his old tutor's Latin had taught him all he knew, and that young writers should read at any rate the first two perseveringly and obediently.

When he was about ten years old it dawned upon him that he had a violent and uncontrollable temper, and, with the simplicity which marked all his character, he decided to get it in hand. One member of the family constantly irritated him to the verge of frenzy, and he invented a form of self-discipline which very few children would have thought of imposing on themselves. My mother entered his room one day and found him walking round and round it, carrying on his back a heavy wooden shutter.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"Getting over a rage," he replied, doggedly continuing the exercise. "When I am so angry that I want to kill somebody, I come in here and carry the shutter three times round the room before I answer them. It is the only way."

I had been sent to school in England, and was not with him, except for one short summer holiday, for three years. When I returned we had one year together, and then, as he was twelve years old, it was decided to send him to America, to St. Paul's School, where the Head

Master, Dr. Coit, was an old friend of my mother's. Here Marion forgot a good deal of what he had learnt at home, or rather it went to sleep in his brain, almost all the interest in study crowded out by the dry old-fashioned methods that English-speaking schoolmasters cling to so obstinately. But he was very happy, carried all before him in athletic games and general popularity, and came back to us the richer for one gift at least, that of music.

Curiously enough, no one had ever divined that he had a voice and an ear. Our two elder sisters, confided in their childhood to Italian attendants who sang, and sang truly and sweetly, to them all day, and later to the care of musically trained governesses, sang and played by nature. They had been fed on music. But Marion and I were less fortunate. The Englishwoman who reigned in our nursery for the first seven years of his life came of another stock, and no sweet "stornelli" and "canzone" ever penetrated there. It was a family joke that neither of us could ever sing a true note, and I, for one, felt the privation bitterly. But when Marion went to St. Paul's School he was obliged to fall in with his class: no questions about musical dispositions were asked; the boys must sing and sing in tune, at the services in chapel and on many other occasions. Marion grumbled at first, gradually found that he could do what was required of him, and, as he grew older, discovered that he had a sweet, powerful baritone voice, a joy to himself and to others.

If he did not make great progress in his studies at the American school, the lack was richly compensated for by the splendid physical training he received there. We were at Siena when he burst in upon us after three years of absence. He was now fifteen, over six feet in height,

superbly proportioned, and absolutely radiating with life and strength. His personality was dazzling, almost disturbing in the calm, old-world indolence of the Tuscan villa. He brought with him all the breeziness of his recent surroundings, the irresponsible gaiety of the American boys, their audacity, their fun, their racy slang which hits the mark like a bullet and dances off like a raindrop, in a burst of laughter. The most beautiful of beautiful girls was spending the summer with us (I never would have an ugly friend), and Marion's cup of joy was full when he found himself royally and completely in love for the first time! It made no difference that she was older than he by some years, and that his was not the first heart she had broken. Neither of them contemplated or courted tragedy; the summer was still young; the days were a dream of colour and perfume; the nights—starlit or moonlit—heaven-sent sessions for wandering in the woods or singing on the balcony. What could youth ask more? We were all gloriously happy and we were fortunate enough to know it. "Oh, le beau cadeau que la jeunesse!"

The next two years Marion spent in Rome with us, studying at the University and with an English clergyman, for he had made up his mind to go to Cambridge as soon as he should be old enough. His love of study returned to him, and he worked enthusiastically though somewhat erratically; he looked and seemed so mature that social lures began to be held out to him, and also the romance of the place and its history rose up and claimed his interest and sympathy, interfering a little with scheduled work but supplying the foundation for the exhaustive study he was to make of it in after-years. Before going to Cambridge he spent some time with a tutor in Essex,

and he grew to love very dearly the remote English country with its hoary traditions and kindly, honest atmosphere. The life in Essex furnished the material for one of his early novels, "The Tale of a Lonely Parish." We were talking about it once, and I remember he said: "England is the most romantic country in the world. Anything could happen in those lonely old country houses lost in a dip of the moors, miles away from the beaten roads! The fierce privacy with which Englishmen surround themselves makes them absolutely independent within their own domain. No Eastern despot has finer opportunities for autocracy than the ordinary English squire."

In Essex he added one more to his list of accomplishments—bell-ringing. This art, lost or non-existent in most parts, had been carefully preserved and was the great pride of the young men of the village. Marion became a master of it, taking a keen pleasure in the mathematical developments of an eight-belled chime. He studied it scientifically, and I have found him working out problems in a thick "Manual for Ringers" when he was thousands of miles away from the little old church in green, sleepy Essex.

He had one or two rough experiences there, one of which spoilt his good looks for a while. He was going away for the Christmas holidays, and was sauntering up and down the platform of the station, when, without a sound or word of warning, a man whom he had never seen in his life stepped up to him and delivered such a blow in Marion's face that it broke the bone of his nose. History does not say what happened to the man. It turned out that he was raving drunk. Poor Marion went through all the Christmas festivities with a

compromising black patch across his nose, which in the end recovered its outline, and he said that the incident had given him a queer insight into British peasant character. A Frenchman or an Italian would have started by offensive language ; the stolid East Anglian hit straight from the shoulder at the first person he met, without wasting time in trying to pick a quarrel.

On another occasion my brother was walking along a solitary lane, and met a rustic using fearful language to a refractory pig that stubbornly refused to trot in the right direction.

"What good will all that cursing do?" Marion exclaimed scornfully. "Here, I'll show you how to drive the beast," and he lifted his blackthorn walking-stick and gave the creature a gentle tap on the head. The result was instantaneous : the pig rolled over stone-dead ! The countryman cursed more than ever and vowed to take out a summons. In the end Marion had to pay him for the pig, and then pay him to cart it away.

His unusual strength was rather a snare to him, leading him into danger sometimes. Once when he was staying in a fortress farm in the Abruzzi he returned home late one evening and found the heavy gates closed and barred. His shouts failed to rouse the inmates from their sleep, and he was beginning to lose his temper ; he thought he might as well break down the door. Stepping back a few paces, he ran at it with his head down like a young bull, and the next moment he was inside the house. The iron bar, nearly a yard long and thick in proportion, was bent in two. The head was none the worse for the impact.

He was very fond of the wild Abruzzi district, which he afterwards described so vividly in "Saracinesca." In

order to become thoroughly acquainted with the people's ways he dressed as one of them, and wandered about in the mountains for a whole month leading a mule laden with sacks of beans which he sold to the peasants as he went. They thought he was a "Mercante di fave" from Rome, and never dreamed that he could speak any dialect but the broad "lingua Romana."

It was during this time that he had an adventure which deeply impressed his imagination. He and another man had been walking all day through the loneliest part of the hills, and when night found them, hungry and exhausted, they had hopelessly lost their way. As they entered a deep ravine Marion's companion collapsed into unconsciousness. They were far from any human habitation, and it was as impossible to obtain help as to leave the poor fellow alone with the malaria and the wolves. So Marion raised him up, and half carried, half dragged him on through the darkness, following a foot-path which he knew must finally lead them back into the world of men. The rocks rose high and black on either side; the night was so dense in the deep ravine that nothing was visible except the misty strip of sky overhead. Worn out and faint, my brother struggled on with his heavy burden. Then he must have become light-headed, for, just as he felt his own strength failing, a wonderful illumination flooded the place. The black perpendicular rocks on either side became fairy palaces of unimaginable beauty, towering up in delicate Gothic spires towards the stars, and from their thousand casements streams of light shot out and filled the air with rainbow colours, rose and white, golden and green and violet. The pilgrim forgot his weariness and walked on for some hours through the enchanted city, intoxicated

with its loveliness. When it faded away the ravine was left behind, the open country reached, and the walls of a hospitable farmhouse rose before him.

He was a magnificent swimmer and was never so happy as when performing amazing evolutions in the water. Once indeed he was laid up for a long time, having strained himself by diving from a great height with another man, who did not dive off in time, sitting on his shoulders ; but as a rule he was as much at home in deep water as on land. Many a glorious swim we had together when the sun was rising over the Bay of Naples. To watch him stand poised for a dive was to see the dream of a Greek sculptor breathing in the flesh ; his strength was as the strength of ten, and my confidence in him was so great that had he bidden me swim with him to Capri—or New York—I would have obeyed him unhesitatingly by having at least a good try.

In later years he lived almost as much at sea as on shore, disappearing from our ken for weeks at a time with his faithful sailors, Luigi, Antonio, San Pietro, and the rest of his devoted bodyguard, who looked upon him half as a demi-god to be obeyed, half as a big beloved child to be taken care of. The Sorrento sailor is not a careless, weather-beaten hero at all ; he hates a storm and shivers when his master sails before the wind. As Marion put to sea preferably in rough weather and loved to send his yacht tearing along on the full strength of a gale, the men had many anxious moments, and a good percentage of their wages went in redeeming vows for big candles to be lit before the altar of the Blessed Saint Antonino when they returned in safety. But certainly the worst fright they ever had was on one calm morning off the coast of Calabria, near my brother's other home,

the castle of San Niccola. He had gone overboard for a swim and was returning to the yacht when he saw them all beckoning to him frantically, their faces pale with fear. A few strokes brought him alongside, a leap and a scramble over the taffrail, just as a large shark came nosing round the bows! There had never been any of these unpleasant visitors along our shores before, but with the opening of the Suez Canal they gradually found their way into the Mediterranean and have a good deal spoilt the pleasure of bathing in deep water there.

But before this little adventure Marion had "eaten many loaves," as the Romans say, and had seen some very unexpected sides of life. After his probation in Essex he went to Cambridge, where he remained a year. He managed to get through an examination—one of the very few feats of the kind on record in the family; for Heaven, kind enough in some ways, forgot to make any of us competition Wallahs. At Cambridge he did not earn the reputation of an ardent student, but he enjoyed himself immensely. That term "immense" was one which was constantly being applied to him by his compeers, and at last he thought he might as well show people what it meant. He hunted round for the biggest trotting-horse he could find, had a towering dog-cart built, dressed himself in checks a foot square and of outrageous colours, and, thus equipped, paraded the dignified University town, to the scandal of the authorities and the delight of his contemporaries. He had a clock (a French gimcrack exactly imitating a watch), and, having instructed his tailor to make a pocket large enough to hold it, he attached it to a big dog-chain, the links of which dangled ostentatiously across his waistcoat. One day in the train a facetious stranger, glacing at this ornament, asked him

the time. When Marion pulled out a watch two inches thick and as big round as a musk melon, the joker blanched. He thought he was shut in with a maniac, and rushed from the carriage at the next stop.

But all the fun and extravagance was destined to be short-lived. Heavy money losses came upon the family, and my brother returned to Rome, saddened and perplexed, to carve out an independence. I was married and away—in China—but a whim of my girlhood served as a straw to show him his direction. I had read all Max Müller's enchanting books, and had fallen in love with Sanskrit. I bought grammars, dictionaries, everything that could help me on my ambitious road, and left it all behind when more human allurements called to me. Marion, feeling the need of solitude for reflection, had decided to go off into the Abruzzi, as usual, to think things out. His portmanteau was packed, and he stood for a moment wondering whether he had forgotten anything. "Why, I haven't put in a book!" he exclaimed, and looked round the room for one. A shabby brown volume caught his eye, and, without even glancing at the title, he tossed it in among his shirts and boots, and started on his journey. When that was accomplished he opened the book thus picked up at haphazard, and read it from beginning to end, many, many times. It was my old Sanskrit grammar, and the vistas it opened up were so new, so enthralling, that during the weeks he spent in the hills Marion required no other food for his mind. When he returned to Rome he was resolved to become a Sanskrit scholar, even if he starved in the process. But things were not quite so bad as that. By dint of economy it was possible for him to carry out his design, and for two years he worked unremittingly, attending the lectures

at the Roman University, and finally mastering the queen, though not the mother, of all the languages.

I came home from China about that time, and passed a winter with my people in Rome. Money matters had been more or less arranged, and they were living in the Palazzo Altemps, in one of the great wandering Roman apartments where there is room for everybody to be alone. I found my brother very much changed, his character matured now by an inflexible purpose—still sunny and genial, but much more sympathetic for others than before. I was in very bad health, and his kindness and care greatly helped to set me on my feet again. Indeed he was wonderful in illness: the touch of his strong, magnetic hand; the quiet, reassuring tones of his voice; his strange, instinctive knowledge of the right thing to do, made it possible to throw off pain and weakness, and respond to the command, "Be thou healed."

He had chosen for himself a great tower-room, where no one else would have dreamed of living. His personal tastes could only be described as ascetic; he abhorred luxury, and his surroundings were hard, simple, inspiring as those of any monk. Yet to give pleasure to others he would organize the most enchanting little fêtes. On New Year's Eve—it was the last day of 1878—he invited us and all our intimate friends to see the old year out and the new year in, in his tower. We climbed the long, twisting stairs, and found ourselves in a fairyland of soft colour and light. There were flowers everywhere, nooks hung with old tapestries, a score of little tables set with a dainty supper; and when we had done exclaiming at the magic of the transformation, the most perfect music fell upon our ears. Some of his musical

friends were hidden away in a recess of the stairs; a small organ had somehow been coaxed up there; violins and 'cellos and a quartette of men's voices gave us one beautiful old chant after another, and, when the bells sounded midnight and the year's end, we all stood up like one man, and, holding hands in a great circle, sang our hearts out in "Auld Lang Syne."

Soon after that, early in 1879, Marion went to India with a learned and entertaining man, Doctor d'Acunha—an Indian pundit with a Portuguese name. He came to us with an introduction from some one or other—introductions hailed in my mother's house—and we were all captivated with his personality and learning. Yet it was a great wrench for us when Marion went away with him, intent upon completing his Sanskrit studies at their fountain-head.

He made Allahabad his headquarters, and there was a moment in the course of his first year there—the year of Sir Louis Cavagnari's murder at Cabul—which came near to making my brother a soldier and not a writer. His funds were exhausted, and there seemed no possibility of continuing his studies. In deep discouragement he finally made up his mind to enlist in the British Army, and wrote offering himself as a recruit in a regiment of the Dragoon Guards. But, with characteristic fatalism, he decided to wait twenty-four hours before posting the letter, so as to give his luck a chance to catch up with him. The twenty-four hours had all but elapsed when he received a letter himself, informing him that the Editor of the *Allahabad Pioneer* had died suddenly, and asking him to take over the paper. Gladly enough he accepted the offer; the rest—how "Mr. Isaacs" came to be written—is too well known to need repetition.

But there is a funny incident in the history of my brother's first novel which is less known. He wrote it in a few weeks and sent it to Macmillan, and then forgot all about the manuscript, for three months passed and no notice was taken of it. This, I am glad to say, was his only experience of the "weary, weary waiting on the everlasting road" which is the heaviest trial of a literary career. At the end of that time came the usual grudging acceptance: "Although we do not foresee any wide sale for your book"—or something of the kind—"we are ready to undertake its publication"—on the smallest terms a beginner could be induced to accept. Years afterwards, when, as Henry James remarked to me, Marion was "meat and drink and lodging to publishers," he was shown a letter from Mr. John Morley (now Lord Morley), who had been a reader for the firm in question. Mr. Morley's appreciation of the novel-reading public was hardly justified by events. He classed "Mr. Isaacs" as a work which would never be popular; it would not "pay well," but he advocated its production, saying that it was original and well written, and would do the respected publishing house no harm.

Marion himself always said that the instant success of "Mr. Isaacs" was a piece of stupendous luck. The fashionable world had gone off its head about esoteric Buddhism, everybody was either a Mahatma or a Chela, and formerly gross-living people were giving their entertainers much inconvenience by refusing to eat beef and mutton, in public at any rate. "Mr. Isaacs" struck the note of the moment, and any one who had not read the book was hopelessly out of the running. Its writer became the idol of the lion-hunters, much to his own amusement and finally to his annoyance. I shall never

forget the quiet definite way in which he used to turn off the compliments and questions of gushing enthusiasts when they began to talk about the "immortal work." Yet they were right, and he was wrong. Society has forgotten all about Theosophy; Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott have faded away into the twilight that mercifully swallows up extinct faddists; but Marion's first novel is a classic, dear to all who love noble English, faultless construction, and a good story.

And yet it was a mere accident of expediency that he became a novel-writer at all. His heart was in far higher things. He always looked forward to the day when he should be able to close the book of romance and devote himself to the one study which he considered worth pursuing, that of history.

His essays in that direction—"Ave Roma Immortalis," "The Rulers of the South," and "Venice"—were signally successful; but, compared with his aspirations, they were as the spray thrown off the crest of a towering wave. He was a specialist; it was the history of Italy which appealed to him; and a glance at the hundreds of tomes on the subject in his library, all read and marked, showed how thoroughly he had qualified himself to treat of it. Thoroughness was his passion, and it came to him by right, for our father, in spite—or perhaps because—of his great artistic gifts, was the most patient and sincere of workers. "Thorough" was our mother's watchword; she said it was the anagram of all the virtues; and my brother carried out in every detail of life the command, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." He was so scrupulous that he would not write about any subject of which he had not personally and practically mastered the details. "A Roman Singer"

was the outcome of years of familiarity with the musical life of Rome; for "Marietta, a Maid of Venice," he went into every process of Venetian glass-work on the spot. He was his own architect; he and his foreman builder—who could not read or write, yet directed and paid a great gang of workmen and never made a mistake in his entirely mental accounts—planned and carried out the tower, the magnificent sea wall, the spacious, harmonious courts and buildings of the Sorrento villa, with such perfection that no trained architect has a fault to find with the work, and such accuracy that each brick and stone was counted beforehand and the tally needed no correcting when it was done.

For "Marzio's Crucifix" Marion became a silversmith, making his own designs and beating them out in the metal in lovely classic forms. My mother had a silver bowl as a memory of the book; nymphs danced round its girth, and the workmanship was delicate and vigorous, as if executed by a long-trained hand. To write "The Witch of Prague" he went and lived in that city and learned Bohemian. It was the seventeenth language he had acquired. I do not know how many were added to the list afterwards. Slav and Scandinavian, Persian and Arabic, Latin and Teutonic tongues, he possessed them all, and I remember his telling me gravely that *any one* ought to be able to learn a new language in six weeks! For him each fresh achievement was play. A seer, one of the real "Illuminati," once said to him, "You would have been as successful in any other career you had chosen to undertake."

One pre-eminent subject he did not care to discuss—theology. His religion was too much a part of himself to invite analysis when once he had satisfied himself



From a painting by Lenbach

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of its supreme truth and irrefutable logic. Yet, to assist others, he was planning to write a pamphlet entitled "Why I am a Catholic." Rocky in faith, yet simple as a child in practice, he was one of the few latter-day Catholics who take their creed as the Crusaders took it, whole, unquestioningly, and joyfully. And he took the gift of life in the same way: nothing passed unnoticed, no point of interest was missed; he had the keenest sense of humour, and his laugh would ring out like a boy's if any one told a good story, an art of which he was himself a master. He wanted to live, to stay longer with those he loved. He always took the most hopeful view of his own health, and was greatly cheered when it seemed to be improving a little, a few days before he died. Yet he was utterly detached. Everything was his—success, honour, the affectionate companionship of a devoted wife, who read every line he wrote with the keenest interest and true literary acumen; brave sons and beautiful daughters who worshipped their father; but nothing in this world had any real hold on him. He worked to the very end, knowing that the end might come at any moment, in order that his dear ones might not miss any of the comforts and luxuries with which he had always surrounded them. He was princely in his dealings with others, the helper of the poor, the defender of the oppressed, a tower of strength to all in trouble. But for himself he asked nothing, desired nothing that the world can give. He aspired to only one thing—immortality. And when the call came, on Good Friday, in the glory of the sunset by the sea, he answered with a smile and shed his fetters without a sigh. The only wonder was that they should have held him here so long.

CHAPTER X

A GREAT LOSS AND MANY NEW FRIENDS

My mother leaves us—Her steamer frozen in in Boston Harbour—My books—My father's death—The Washington monument—His funeral—"A pretty hymn"—Return to Rome—Genzano—A narrow escape—Dr. Sargent—John Sargent—Waldo and Julian Story—A meeting with Hans Andersen—Siena—The Brownings—An awesome experience.

I MUST return for a moment to the year 1857, the date from which memory's wings have lifted me and borne me far. In the January of that year my mother left us, recalled to Europe by the news of my father's illness. It was a frightfully severe winter; the steamer in which she sailed was frozen in, in Boston harbour, and finally had to have its way cut out by ice-ploughs before it could reach the open sea. We were all left in Bordentown, and one or two delightful things came to console me for the absence of my father and mother. One was—the books. People had found out that I was fond of reading, and thenceforth presents to me took that most helpful shape. First came a fat blue volume, the immortal fairy stories of Madame d'Aulnoy. Written for grown-ups under Louis XIV., these enchanting tales, the very essence of romance, must appeal for ever to all who are young enough to love, old enough to smile. Dear Gracieuse and Percinet, beautiful Oiseau Bleu—how many enchanting hours I passed in your company, seated on the broad step beneath the window in the big

nursery in Bordentown! Hans Andersen came to me a little later; but much as I loved him, his colder northern genius never appealed to me as did the exuberant colour and richness of the Frenchwoman's fancies. There were other books, too, which were supposed to tell of real life, charming stories where the moral spoke for itself—a literature for the young that has passed away with the ideas to which it pointed our growing imaginations. All the three volumes of "Leila," "Lilian's Golden Hours," "The Children of the New Forest," "Kenneth, or the Retreat of the Grand Army," and, a year or two afterwards, dear Miss Yonge's "Lances of Lynwood" and "The Little Duke"—these were some of my treasures, and I never went to bed at night without assuring myself that they were all in their places on my particular shelf.

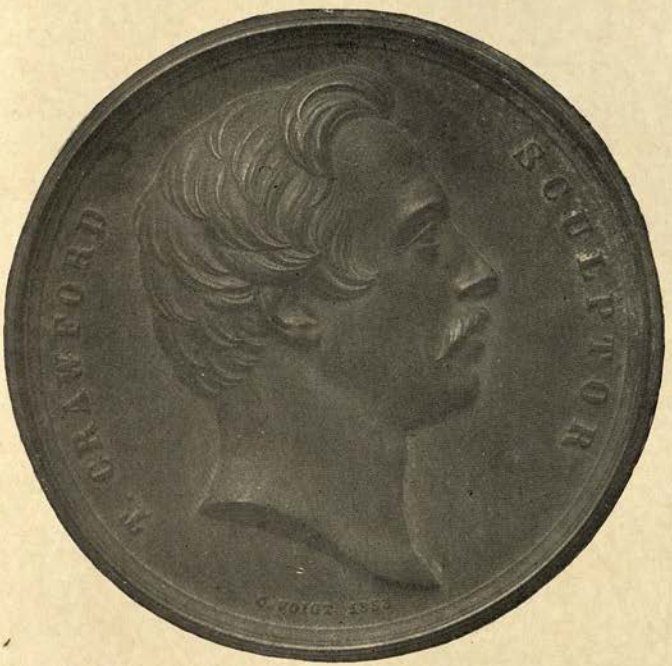
Down in the schoolroom, where I now passed a couple of hours in the morning, was the long series of Abbott's histories, so called—Julius Cæsar, Darius, Alexander the Great, and many more, in which the heroes of antiquity lived and spoke and moved before our eyes as they can never do for modern children, who indeed hardly know their names. They were all living personalities to us, and although many of the stories told rested on the slightest possible fabric of fact, the reality of the characters remained with us, and the easy romantic style gave us all, without exception, that love of historical reading which my elders believed then (as I believe it now) to be the one solid foundation for true education.

But I read too much, and a sad day came when that happiness was limited to half an hour at a time. A far sadder one was in store. One day in the autumn of that year my Aunt Annie came into the room with a letter

in her hand and tears flowing from her eyes. She told the nurse, while I stood by frozen and dumb, that my father was dead. Even now I can hardly speak of that time. The sun was gone from my sky. I suppose they thought I knew nothing of death, for they explained to me, again and again, that I should never see him any more. How very, very little grown-up people understand of a child's heart! That night the nurse, who had been really kind throughout the day, told me that I must never mention my father's name in my prayers again; it would be dreadful wickedness to do so! That was the last blow, and never was there a more broken-hearted little creature than I when at last I cried myself to sleep.

But in sleep he came back to me alive, radiant, his own glorious self, year after year, and I would cry, "Not dead! Alive! alive!" and run into his arms—until many another blow had at last dulled the receptiveness of my tired spirit, and also, with so many stages of life's journey accomplished, the harbour lights began to shine, and I could look forward, not back.

At last my mother returned to us. She had not been alone in her nine months of watching and waiting for the inevitable end. My father's sister Jennie, the devoted confidante of his early days (now married to a dear kind man whom I knew as Uncle William Campbell), went over to share the labour of love and sorrow. The old servant Giuseppe was with him too; but my father died in London, very far from the home he loved. His last work, the Washington monument, was cast in bronze in Munich while he lay dying; he had lost his sight some months before, and never beheld his achievement. My poor mother, who was the most gallant woman I ever



From a bronze medal

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knew, had to make all arrangements herself for bringing the colossal thing to America. Quite alone, broken-hearted as she was, and worn out with nursing, she chartered a vessel, had the deck cut out, and saw to every detail of the shipment with the calm energy of a man of business. When all was done she sailed for Boston, bringing my father's body with her. The two vessels crossed the ocean at the same time.

The country rose to welcome the dead artist and his great work. His funeral was a public ovation, the unveiling of the monument a national demonstration. I saw neither. My two sisters were taken, but I was thought too young to understand—I, who had watched him at work, who had been nearer to him in so many ways than any of the others! I was a born fatalist, and it never struck me to protest against the decision, so I mooned about in lonely sorrow in Bordentown, and my nurse taught me an appropriate hymn, beginning:

"Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?"

The mention of this reminds me of an incident which nearly sent my mother into hysterics. Her irrepressible sense of humour never deserted her even in the most tragic moments, and one of these certainly came when she arrived in Bordentown and saw us all for the first time since her bereavement. My two sisters and my eldest cousin, Louise Mailliard, had each learnt a hymn to recite by way of welcome—an attention which children in those days were recommended to show to any important visitor. Each was to choose her own hymn, and keep the secret till the great moment arrived.

When all the embracing and greeting—and some of

the natural weeping too—was over, Louise whispered to her mother:

"May I say my pretty hymn now?"

Aunt Annie assented, Mamma was told of the treat in store for her, and everybody sat down except the reciter. When perfect silence reigned she began in a triumphant sing-song:

"Hark! from the tombs a mournful voice
The end of man proclaims!"

My mother doubled up in silent convulsions of laughter, but she hid her face in her handkerchief and sat through the ordeal, apparently weeping bitterly. The little girl, who had honestly picked out the most appropriate thing she could find, never knew the truth until she had grown up to be a delicately tactful, kind, and intelligent woman.

Children were peppered with hymns in those days; there was a new one to learn every Sunday, and for each great occasion as well. Explanations were deemed unnecessary; the grammar was generally all at sea, and the sounding words had to make meanings for themselves in our puzzled little brains.

"Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land,"

represented my small, weary self crawling over every wreath of roses in a flaring carpet to pick up threads and specks which the nurse was too lazy to sweep away.

"Oh for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame!"

was an implied criticism on florid picture-frames, and an assertion that the Deity not only shared my taste

for the broad flat frames of dull gold which were then coming into fashion, but that He liked to walk in and out of them before the pictures had been fitted in. I should certainly have sympathized with the child who recently told her mother that she liked the hymns about "bears," and in reply to her parent's astonished question said scornfully: "Why, don't you know them? The one about 'After Him the cross-eyed bear,' and the other one,

"'Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she-bear?'"

But I liked the very mystery of the halting verses, and repeated them as talismans when I was frightened, half unconsciously, for many a year. It gave me quite a shock to hear my youngest sister say—long after I was married—that she hated to be taken to the Protestant church which my mother still attended, because she had to listen to "shockingly bad verse, set to incorrect music!"

The religious element in the house became much more emphasized after my father's death, as was natural perhaps in the gloom that had fallen upon us with that event. When we returned to Rome in the spring of 1858, all the sunshine seemed to have left the old Villa Negroni—for a time at least. We had come by way of Havre, Marseille, and Civita Vecchia; from there the journey was performed by carriage, and we drove up to our own door late at night, to find that Giuseppe had not expected us till the next day. There was nothing for supper but dry bread! The next morning I found that most of my toys had been appropriated during our two years' absence—a dreadful blow which greatly shook my

confidence in Giuseppe! But the villa was there, with every carnation and violet in place; the long trellis that closed in the fountain-court was abloom with roses; at my favourite fountain the little old man still spouted water from his eyes when one stopped his marble mouth, and grinned at me cheerily; the distant enclosed garden with secret passages leading down below the great marble fish-pond was as mysterious and beautiful as ever; and, joy of joys, two of the "Century plants," the magic aloes, bloomed that year and sent their great shafts nearly up to our windows!

Coming straight from a more bracing climate, I suppose we all began to droop in the increasing heat, and early in the summer the family moved out to Genzano, where we occupied one floor of the "Villino," a fair-sized house in the grounds of the Palazzo Sforza Cesarino. The grounds, leading by winding paths from the palace down the steep sides of the cup-shaped hollow to the very edge of the Lake of Ariccia, are indescribably beautiful. The slopes, so acute that to go straight down them would be to plunge into the bottomless lake which was once a crater, are laid out in scores of narrow terraces where the wild strawberry is cultivated without ceasing to be wild. The perfume of the fruit, a long, pointed berry of pungent sweetness, fills all the air in the early summer. But I did not enjoy the delights of the villa long; an illness, of which I may speak as a warning to parents, struck me down, and it was many months before I stood up again. For two years previously, I had been, as I would have put it, "bothered" with excessive and prolonged nose-bleedings. For a couple of hours at a time I would have to sit in a corner swamped in towels, watching the others play while I could not move. The only remedies my

nurse knew of were cobwebs stuffed up my poor little nose or a huge cold door-key slipped down my back, and these added penance to my sufferings. If some one else noticed my misfortune she would look at me scornfully and say, "Leave the child alone; it will do her head good." I was suffering for want of sleep too, for if I moved in bed after she had lain down I was scolded or punished, and the terror of disturbing her kept me awake, rigid and cramped, long after she was snoring soundly. Another torture she invented was to keep me on my feet the whole time we were out of doors. She sat down to work or read, but I was never to sit down through the long burning hours of the Italian summer day, while my poor mother fondly imagined that I was enjoying my own little book in some shady corner of the villa.

So one morning about five o'clock, when I called to her, "Mary! my nose!" she growled, "Be quiet and go to sleep." And I was quiet, while the life-blood gushed from my nostrils and nearly drowned me. Towards eight o'clock "Mary" came and dragged me out of bed and stood me on my feet, and that was all I knew for some time. When I recovered consciousness, I saw grave faces around me—my mother white with fear, the doctor, and others. I could not speak, but in a few minutes I began to twist and toss in an anguish of unrest such as I have never experienced since, while that awful flow of blood from my mouth and nose turned all things red, and I saw that people were rubbing my limbs, which were a mass of black patches and hurt horribly. All that day they worked over me. I understood what they said, though they believed I was unconscious. My mother wailed, "Oh, doctor, I always thought that

bleeding to death was painless. This is awful!" And he replied sternly, "No, it can be frightfully painful sometimes." I suppose they had told him of the long-neglected symptoms. He saved me—God knows how, for the attacks returned day after day sometimes, sometimes only after two or three weeks' interval, and I lay, scarcely breathing between whiles, a ghost of a child with no body except for suffering. It was long before I could speak, and I remember lying with the tears coursing down my cheeks because I could not tell my mother that there was a crease in the turnover of the sheet and I wanted it straightened out.

Towards the autumn they used to carry me down to the garden on a mattress and let me lie under some cedars near a fountain. Cyclamens were growing near, and heliotropes. I was deprived of all sense of smell, for I had to wear a pad dipped in a solution of iron somewhere in the back of my nose; it was inserted with a steel spring instrument (a most painful operation), and silk strings passed through my nose and out again at my mouth to keep it in place. One day, in spite of this horror, a faint whiff of heliotrope reached my hungry senses, and I screamed for joy.

Enough of this revolting experience, only told, as I said before, as a warning to parents and nurses. What remained to me—and all of us—from it, was a devout affection for the kind Doctor Sargent, the father of a funny baby boy, with bright eyes and a very hot temper, who is now known to the world as John Sargent, R.A. The Sargents were living in the "Villino" on the floor above us. Had they not been there, there would have been a pretty little gravestone bedimmed with many tears in the English cemetery near Rome, and the world would

have been the poorer for the loss of a very unsatisfactory character. The dear doctor is responsible for it all. He was in trouble at the time, too, for his wife's mother, Mrs. Singer, was slowly dying upstairs, and once or twice I wept bitterly because I wanted to see him and he could not come down to me. But only once or twice ; hour after hour, night after night, the lean strong hand was holding mine, the wise dark eyes were shining down at me full of promises of rest if I "would only be good," and when I was in paroxysms of pain, he would take me in his arms and do to ease me a thousand little things that only his pitiful heart had taught him. What would this suffering world be without the kind doctors ? May the Lord make their beds in Paradise ! as the Irish women say !

"Johnny" Sargent, the future R.A., was a pugnacious little fellow, and I got into dreadful disgrace once for tumbling him over when he wanted to fight Marion. He never had any doubts about his career ; from the time he knew anything, he meant to be a painter, and his people recognized his vocation and encouraged it in every possible way. They settled in Florence, and came down occasionally to Rome ; when we passed through Florence it was always a pleasure to go and see them. The boy was not the only artist in the family ; his eldest sister Emily had remarkable talent, though she confined herself to copying the old masters. Hers are water-colour copies, but of a richness and a depth that must be seen to be appreciated. And both she and her brother were full of music. A big-eyed, sentimental, charming boy, playing the mandolin very pleasantly—that was my last recollection of John for some ten years. Then we met again. He had been studying in Paris, and was already

beginning to be well known. He was very lordly in manner, mighty particular in dress, and talked superciliously about the necessity of painting "pot-boilers" for the undiscriminating public. I had been the acting "Chefesse" of a big Mission, China, and was quite as pleased with myself. I thought I had seen the world! I am afraid we were both still extremely young, but when we had done impressing each other with our respective grandeurs, we found our way back to the old playground of childhood fast enough; and one of the real pleasures of recent years was the finding him and his mother and sister established in London, where they were all endlessly good to me. Their apartment in Chelsea was pure Florence; one found the repose, the stateliness, the elastic atmosphere of the City of Flowers. The Sargents possessed the alchemy which turns grey skies to gold. The dear doctor was gone—where such as he go, but I never felt that he was very far away. I remember trying to describe these dear people and their surroundings in one of my novels, "A Little Grey Sheep," but I am afraid that the picture was not a faithful one, for they never scolded me for it, as they certainly would have done had it been recognizable.

I had some other playfellows of whom the world has since heard, the Story boys, Waldo and Julian—imperious, handsome little fellows whom we saw daily in Rome, as they lived in the Palazzo Barberini, not very far from the Villa Negroni. Their father, W. W. Story, a distinguished sculptor and a charming writer—*vide* "Roba di Roma"—was a real humorist and a perfectly delightful companion. It was all one to him whether he were talking to a great man like Thackeray, who was one of his closest friends and wrote "The Rose and the Ring"

for his children, or a stupid little girl like myself. He always had some new good story to tell, or some fresh joke that would send one into bubbles of laughter. When Hans Andersen was a very old man, he came back to Rome, and, to please him, the Storys gave a children's party. I remember it all so well—the great rooms and the sunshine, the crowds of happy little people and the dear old man, the happiest and youngest-hearted of them all! He played and romped with us, and when everybody was tired, he proposed that he should tell us one of the fairy stories which we all knew and loved so well. The votes went for the "Ugly Duckling," but he said that he could only tell stories with children on his knee! So he called two of us, golden-haired Lily Conrad (now the Marchesa Theodoli) and my fortunate little self, to him, and, with one on either knee, began to tell the tale. How we gazed up into the beautiful pale old face, into the blue eyes that shone so kindly down upon us! But after a few minutes he got tired, and, saying that he was sure many of the children could not understand his queer English, he asked Mr. Story to read it instead. So, while Lily and I nestled up against him, he listened with us—and I think enjoyed our host's beautiful reading as much as we did.

In the summer of 1860—when the world around us was in the throes of war and revolution—we spent the summer in a villa near Siena. The Storys were neighbours, and the Brownings had another villa near by; but ours had the largest, shadiest grounds, so the other children generally came to play with us. I was nine years old and had fairly recovered my health, and the year had been a very interesting one to me, for many books had come into my hands and I knew much of Mrs. Browning's

poetry by heart, and looked forward to the day when I should get hold of that of her husband, which I knew was "splendid," but which, for recalcitrant foreigners in revolutionized Italy, was quite outshone just then by his wife's sentimental liberal outpourings. I had never seen either of them, but Penry, their little boy, was constantly with us—a beautifully dressed child with long chestnut curls, and as spoilt as the only son of two such people was sure to be. He and Waldo Story always wanted to "boss" the little company, and several free fights took place in the "Fairy Ring," a grassy enclosure surrounded with low mossy banks in the remote heart of an acacia wood in our villa.

One morning, when we were all playing there rather more peacefully than usual, the acacia boughs were parted, and a man in a brown velvet jacket stood for a moment just where the sun struck through the trees, looking down at us from a halo of gold and green. His eyes, dark golden brown like his coat, were full of the sun; his face was a very noble one, clear and pale, with an aquiline nose and a beautiful mouth smiling under the golden brown beard.

The next moment he strode into our midst and picked up Penry and tossed him in the air, laughing happily as the little fellow's curls floated wide in the sun. Just so my father used to pick up Marion, and for a minute I had such a "stretta di cuore" remembering him that I could not speak. Then I realized that this was Robert Browning the poet, and that I must never forget that I had seen him at last. He stayed a little and talked to us—I forget what about, but his voice I remember well. It was deep and joyous as the wind when it sang through our cypresses at home on a bright October day.

Soon after this my mother took me to see Mrs. Browning, and that was an awesome experience. From the blaze of the Tuscan summer noon we passed into a great dark room, so dark that it was some time before I made out a lady lying on a couch and holding out her hand to me. I felt my way to a stool on the floor and looked at her for quite an hour without daring to open my lips, while she and my mother spoke in rapturous whispers of the glorious epoch opening up for Italy. Everything was intense—the heat, the enthusiasm, the darkness, and I tried hard to get keyed up to the proper pitch and appreciate my good fortune. But it was of no use. The poetess was everything I did not like. She had great cavernous eyes, glowering out under two big bushes of black ringlets, a fashion I had not beheld before. She never laughed, or even smiled, once, during the whole conversation, and through all the gloom of the shuttered room I could see that her face was hollow and ghastly pale. *Mamma mia!* but I was glad when I got out into the sunshine again! All that day, and long afterwards, I pondered in my own silent, busy way over the strange problem—why should that nice, happy Mr. Browning have such a dismally mournful lady for his wife?

CHAPTER XI

ITALY IN TRANSITION, 1859 AND 1860

Mrs. Browning—Victor Emmanuel—The real man—The Florence ring—An insurrection in Perugia and the adventures of a party of Americans therein—Rome in 1860—Revolutionary literature—The Unity of Italy—Enthusiasm in Central Italy—Piccolomini's high note—The effects of "Unity"—The miller of the Sabines—The rescuing angels—The French in Rome—Growing respect for Pius IX.—"Bombino" and the Queen of Naples—A sight of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria—"Bomba"—The Duke of Terranova's coach and four—The Duchess—"Mr." Nelson and the bandits.

MY impressions of Mrs. Browning had of course to be corrected as I grew older. The woman who inspired "By the fireside" and "O Lyric love, half angel and half bird," must have possessed some very perfect qualities, and there never could be any question of the high order of her intellect. Yet it seems to me that one healthy gleam of humour would have outweighed a good deal of classic learning and high thinking, in so far as the benefit of her influence on her contemporaries was concerned. Of humour she was destitute to the extent of complete unconsciousness of its existence. Had she possessed it in ever so slight a degree, I sometimes think the British public might not have plunged headlong into the vortex of vicarious sentimentality which engulfed it at that time, and that even the course of history might have been sensibly deflected in the direction of honesty and common sense. People who would not and could not take the trouble to inform themselves of the argu-

ments for and against the project of Italian Unity—and the question bristled with both—could and did read and go crazy over "The Court Lady," "The Ship of Peter," and the various poems in which she drew a portrait of Victor Emmanuel for which we are indebted to her alone. The title of "Galant' uomo" which he arrogated to himself had a ring of chivalry for English ears; Italians born know that it merely means "honest," and that if you tell your cook or your butler that he is not a "galant' uomo," you will probably be knifed for the insult. But Victor Emmanuel was not honest; he was one of the vainest and weakest of men, always ready to sacrifice the truth to appearances—*vide* his refusing to change his clothes or even have them brushed for a whole week after the battle of Solferino, ostentatiously and constantly referring to the gallantry testified to by their filthy condition. Of his private life it is not necessary to speak, except to say that he was the very opposite of the Galahad English people believed him to be.

It would be unfair to aver that he had no patriotism, that his stirring speech about Austrian oppression, on the 10th of January, 1859, was not the outcome of some real indignation. But had it not been dictated and composed for him by his advisers he could never have pronounced it. The protests against the Austrians were quite as open and sincere in Rome as they were in Piedmont. To be called a "German" was a deadly offence in the city of my home, where many a truer patriot than Victor Emmanuel stood stoutly by the Holy Father and the principles he represented. The King of Sardinia was pushed into prominence by astute revolutionists who considered the time unripe for unmasking their ultimate

aims ; he had faith, poor man, and lived in mortal terror of being eternally damned for deeds which a courageous and honest man would have refused to commit. He put faith and conscience in the balance against his pirated throne, and chose the throne. I saw him day after day for some four years after the last step was taken, read day after day the account of all his doings. Never did I behold a more terror-stricken countenance than his. And not once between usurpation and death did he raise his voice to save his new subjects from pillage, from starvation, from soul-murder.

He was a bad Christian and an exceedingly bad soldier, but he attacked the Papacy, and for that good deed he will ever be enshrined as a spotless hero in the average Briton's mind. The feeling in Italy against Austria was quite sincere and quite justified by the atrocious oppression under which the disputed provinces groaned ; the sympathy with it in England was a flagrant sham—all the real venom was directed at the Papacy. Other countries have suffered under the tyranny of usurpers : Russia has scarcely proved a kind step-mother to alien subjects ; German methods in Poland, Belgian methods in Africa are even now putting Austrian achievements in that direction to shame. But the sensible British public, barring a speech or two, minds its own affairs, for Protestantism suffers from no humane convulsions where there is no Catholicism to attack.

And it was the promised downfall of Catholicism which was hailed with such joyful acclamation by what I must call the "Florence ring"—the English-speaking residents in Italy, headed by Mrs. Browning ; not by her husband—the man was too great to hate greatness, though he struck at it in ignorance once or twice. From the

narrow bars of "Casa Guidi windows" the poetess saw just what she wished to see of the world around her, and found the limited picture so dramatic, so inspiring to her easy verse, that she metaphorically drew her head in when the delightful torrent of enthusiasm was at its height, and wrote. It would have been a pity to cloud that crystal fount with jarring facts, so her admirations became worships, her disapprovals damnations, for the unbridled enthusiast is ever also the most hopeless pessimist—a fatal supporter and an unjust enemy.

My dear mother had many friends in the Florence ring, and in our peaceful home every new step towards Rome was hailed by her as a personal victory. She was so gentle, so just, that in looking back I have often found it difficult to understand the animus which she showed at that time against the kind Ruler of the city where she had, by her own choice, dwelt for so many years, years of much peace and prosperity. But her humility of mind made her prone to follow the lead of the friends she loved, and a certain American family, with which she had been closely bound up all her life, had about this time a rather alarming adventure, which, in the fiery versions of it published in England and America, roused in those countries a perfect storm of indignation, and confirmed more experienced persons than my mother in their bitter prejudice against the Church. In 1859 an insurrection had taken place in Perugia, the chief city of Umbria, one of the Papal States. A detachment of troops, including a company of the Swiss Guards, were sent to restore order. Before they arrived all foreigners were advised to depart, as the inhabitants were prepared to defend their opinions; but one American party, consisting, if

I remember rightly, of four ladies (one an elderly invalid), one gentleman, a couple of maids, and a lapdog, refused to leave. They sympathized enthusiastically with the insurgents, and wished to assist at their coming triumph over the emissaries of the Pope.

Unfortunately for them, there was no triumph. The Papal troops met with some rather stubborn resistance, but after a few hours entered the town as conquerors. Conquerors are not apt to be in the best of tempers, and the soldiers' irritation was fanned by shots from the houses as they passed up the narrow, crooked main street of the place. Some of these shots came from the windows of the hotel where the Americans were staying, and it was instantly raided, according to the usual procedure in such cases. The travellers, thoroughly terrified now, took refuge in a closet which opened out of one of their rooms, and passed a very anxious day there—a critical day for the little dog, who narrowly escaped being throttled; his mistress kept her hand on his throat the whole time, prepared to strangle him at once if he attempted to bark. The good genius of faithful doggies kept him silent; but one of the Swiss Guards, a Tyrolese, Conrad by name, and a devout Catholic, chanced to discover the refugees, and at once took it upon himself to protect them from any molestation at the hands of his angry comrades. I do not think they were in any real danger; the men would probably have respected their nationality. But Conrad meant to make sure, and, feigning drunkenness, threw himself down on the floor outside their hiding-place, and snored in apparent unconsciousness, under the kicks and gibes of his companions, when they broke into the room. A few hours later all was quiet, and the party, fearfully

shaken by their fright, very cramped and very hungry, emerged into peace and safety.

They were rich, generous, and grateful, and the good fellow who had guarded them was nobly rewarded by the present of a fine farm in his native land, and a pension as well. But their liberal sympathies were tremendously strengthened by their fright, and, though they were dear, good, high-minded people, the incident certainly lost nothing in the telling; and it was told, in trumpet blasts, all over Europe and America, as a final proof of Papal iniquity. It afforded Mrs. Browning, also, the matter for a part of one of her Jeremiads of reproach; the whole thing was too dramatic for her to neglect—or investigate.

The Papal troops were under orders to recapture a revolted city for its lawful sovereign. Because he happened to be also the Head of the Church, the exercise of his rights was called a crime, and the retribution inflicted was denounced as wholesale slaughter.

As a matter of fact, the retribution was slight, and the officer who commanded the expedition adhered strictly to the accepted military rules in such cases, and showed moderation whenever it was possible to do so. His approach was known for some days beforehand in the town, though he did not choose for his attack the particular gate at which he was expected. When the insurgents refused his summons to surrender, he withdrew to a convenient distance, and opened fire on the gate with his artillery. The street behind it was a narrow one, with houses close on either side; and the mob of revolutionists gathered in great numbers inside the portal, trusting, when it should be destroyed, to rush into these houses and escape capture. It is to be supposed that the

nearest dwellings had been emptied of non-combatants as soon as the spot had been designated for attack and defence.

The cannon soon battered down the gate, but the insurgents, seeing that the troops were still some little way off, did not at once disperse, and were disagreeably surprised by the rapidity with which the troops followed up their success. Then there was a belated rush for the houses on either side, the victors pursuing the fugitives and killing all they found in the first two or three houses. This was at about two o'clock in the afternoon. A few minutes afterwards the troops marched in perfect order up the main street. Then shots began to pepper them from the roofs. Two or three were fired from that of the hotel where the American party were staying. A detachment was ordered to search the building, with the result that the proprietor and one of his men-servants were shot. One or two other houses were entered in the same quite legitimate way, and civilians found with weapons in their hands were killed—five persons in all after the fight at the gate. By four o'clock the men were in barracks preparing their food, and the town was quiet. No injury had been inflicted on any person who was not believed to be guilty of directly firing on the troops, and the punishment meted out for this act was that enforced by the military authorities of all nations, under similar circumstances.

But misrepresentation is a virtue when directed against the Supreme Pontiff. I was much amused to find the following item in a generally accepted "Chronology," published in London for use in Civil Service examinations in 1872: "March 19th, 1860. Suppression of the political outbreak in Rome with great barbarity."

I have not the records of the time under my hand, and cannot categorically contradict the statement; but in March 1860 I was in Rome, a very observant little person, nine years old, entirely in the hands of my mother, my American governess, and my Methodist nurse—all three deeply prejudiced against the local authorities. The political situation was constantly discussed before me, and my own intense veneration for Pius IX. I had to keep to myself, for he was a most unpopular person in the family. During all those days I was never allowed to miss my walk in the Public Gardens; on the 19th, the feast of St. Joseph and a popular holiday, it seems to me that the people were all out in their best clothes, that the frying stalls (one must always eat "fritto" on St. Joseph's Day) were gay with flowers and garlands as they were the year before, and that everybody was in a particularly good temper. I cannot remember any disturbance in the city, and the "barbarity," which would have been welcome food for comment to those around me, was never even mentioned. The "Chronology" may be right, but even so it seems a pity that history is not sometimes written by those who make it.

The article can be very cleverly manipulated, however. I found, preserved as curiosities among my mother's papers, certain leaflets which throw a sinister light on the methods by which Italian independence and unity were attained. These leaflets, printed by the million and scattered in houses, streets, railway-stations, shops, etc., all over the peninsula, contained blasphemous parodies of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Doxology, in all of which the names of friends and enemies were substituted for the Divine ones. There were varied

versions, but the following, addressed to the Emperor of Austria, will serve as an example :

Padre nostro che sei in Vienna,
Sia il tuo nome dimenticato,
Ed il tuo regno rovinato,
Compiuta la tua volontà saltanto in easa tua.
Daci oggi il nostro pane di Libertà,
E perdonaci le nostre colpe come noi ti perdoniamo le tue ;
E non ci lasciar cadere più nella tentazione di scoffaciarti,
Ma liberaci dal giogo tuo. Cosi sia.

Metternich's dictum still holds true : "There is no such country as 'Italy'; it is merely a geographical expression." To be called an Italian is an insult to the Roman. "Quando vennero gli Italiani" is the expression used to designate the events of September 1870, generally accompanied by a groan for the misery that the strangers brought with them.

The "unity" of Italy is a statistical fact, and the most uncompromising of reactionaries must accept it while it lasts. But it is only statistical. A country where a score of races have hated one another for thousands of years, have lived as neighbours but struggled as rivals incomprehensible to each other, even in speech, can never become a homogeneous nation. Nor, in the judgment of the wise, was it ever desirable that they should do so, because all the separate states on that teeming soil had separate and unique gifts to confer on the world. It may be well for raw, sparsely inhabited continents, like Russia or the United States, to come under the precarious guidance of a central government. The former deals with millions of under-vitalized intelligences, bred from one stock, animated and bound together by two saving principles—invincible patriotism, invincible

religious faith. The latter simply makes no attempt at governing; the great, half-empty country provides plenty of room for the good and the bad, the wise and the foolish, to fight out their disagreements in their own way. If an American citizen finds the laws of one state too stringent or too honest, he has only to step over the border into the next; there is legislation to suit all cases except those of people who prefer no legislation at all—and if they travel far enough they will reach districts admirably adapted to their requirements.

But how different is Italy's case! The geologists tell us that her soil and that of her sister, Greece, were the first to be co-ordinated in the development of the earth's surface. They were *terra firma*, drinking in air and sunshine, when the remainder of the globe was still a shifting, quivering mass—an embryo world, a world in the making.

These lovely lands, floating like flowers on a warm heaven of sea, were compounded of the richest elements the Creator's hand could choose. They were not given to man for his first Eden. The hotter, fiercer cradle by the Euphrates was chosen for that. But when the race instinctively differentiated itself, and wandered North and South and East and West, its finest scions, perfected physically and mentally by countless centuries of unconscious selection, at last took root along the jewelled shores of Italy—each little family a commonwealth of self-defence, self-enrichment, self-elevation. From all the world their peers came to them; their brethren from Greece, first as equals to claim their share, then as captives rich in all but liberty; the Goth and the Gaul, the Norseman and the Spaniard, the Saracen and the Jew, they came to conquer, to rule, to rob, and to trade. And

each brought more than he ever took away, left behind him children of his blood, who, in that forcing ground of individuality and intellect, built up States that were distinct nations, each sufficient to itself, a full-blooded potentiality that has set its mark on Time, because every gift was used, every force concentrated on one object, individual and separate supremacy.

Run over the list, already blurring under "the world's coarse thumb": Venice, Ravenna, Milan, Ferrara, Bologna, Padua, Modena, Verona, Parma, Genoa, Siena, Pisa, Florence, Rome, Naples, Amalfi, Salerno, Palermo—has any country ever carried such a lapful of cities, each famous, either in Art or Learning, in War or Commerce? It is a compendium of human attainments, only possible under the specialized conditions which governed the geographical and political being of Italy.

Granted that she was in decadence, that intelligence was at a low ebb, and independence already largely diminished by the accidents and vicissitudes from which humanity can never be exempt; yet there remained the civic virtues—pride in the beautiful little city, love of its very stones, the jealous conservation of its distinctive speech, that wise respect for the past from which a healthy future still might spring. All this fine material has been thrown into the mortar of coarse, bastard modernism, has been mercilessly ground to dust, and is no longer capable of nourishing a single seed of real value. A French ecclesiastic once wrote to a too ambitious soul: "Si Dieu vous veut violette, pourquoi vous faire cèdre?" Italy was a garden, not of humble violets, it is true; her flowers were Crown Imperials of light and splendour. She has torn them up and cast them out in the hope of producing in their stead material that shall enable

her to march with the machine-made time. But in her blindness she has only sown her once rich soil with salt and ashes. Her day is over for the present. Extortion, oppression, and organized atheism have done their work so well, that it is doubtful whether any person now alive will see the new birth which we all pray may be granted to her; and no one can foretell what form it will take. Meanwhile the one power[1] which the Mazzinis and Cavours and Garibaldis planned to annihilate, and believed they had crushed in Italy, Catholicism, has taken on such portentous force all over the world, that the Government of the country only counts in other nations' eyes as a policeman with a bad record permitted to keep watch in the Vatican's backyard so long as he behaves himself. The day he betrays that trust will be his last.

It requires some effort of memory's power of realization for me to recall what I saw and heard myself in Central Italy fifty years ago; the reverse of the medal has been before my eyes ever since. It is hard for me to believe that the people who immediately after the change began to mourn and curse the actual state of things, were in many instances those who had most loudly acclaimed the new Government. Yet so it is. In Siena, in 1860, the enthusiasm was unbounded. The plebiscite had taken place on March 12th, some four months before we migrated thither for the summer, and during all our stay the dignified old town was still fluttering with red, green,

[1] See "Le Plan de la Franc-maçonnerie en Italie et en France" (Léon Dehon, Lethielleux, Paris, 1908), from autograph letters, documents, programmes, with a key to the terms of double meaning used by the Freemasons of Italy and France, terms only comprehensible to the members of the thirty-third degree. The party's acknowledged poet laureate, Carducci, unfortunately for his patrons, did not make use of the cipher—hinc illæ lacrimæ!

and white flags; every one wore a badge or rosette of the gay new colours, so much more attractive than the stern black and white which had spelt "Siena" to the world for some seven hundred years. The very water-melon vendors wrote above their sliced fruit, with its green rind, crimson pulp, and white heart, "La Natura mi diede questi colori" (Nature gave me these colours).

There were gala representations in the theatre, where Piccolomini, the famous *prima donna*, sang national songs to roaring audiences. My mother was there one night when the pretty little lady had embarked on a song of which the highest note surpassed her range. She tried it, gave it up, pointed despairingly to the ceiling, and subsided. It was an apt illustration of what the country was attempting, a correct forecast of the results. Some nine years later I passed the summer in Siena again, and had occasion to call the attention of the greatest land-owner in the place to the miserable condition of his tenants' houses.

"They are hovels, unfit for human habitation," I told him. "You might at least knock out a few holes in the walls, and give these poor creatures some light and air!"

"My dear young lady," he replied, "I would gladly do so, but for every window I make an additional tax is put upon the building. The Government has got the last centime I can afford to pay. If I make any improvements now we shall all starve."

Our own vicinity had the same story to tell. A land-owner in the Sabines asked me in 1871, just a year after the Italians came, to ride out with him to a distant property which he wished to visit; there had been trouble and some inexplicable things had been happening. It was time for the master to look into it all. So

one bright autumn day we left the castle and rode for some hours through tinted woodlands, flaming under the first touch of the frost, and came out on a hillside, scarred from top to bottom by a recent landslide. A torrent raced through the valley, far below us on our right, and where the avalanche of rocks and earth had almost dammed its course, the remains of a stone bridge and of a building of some kind were just discernible. Beyond the scar the valley rose steeply, so that the stream fell in leaps and bounds before reaching the ruined bridge.

We rode along, the horses picking their way through the *débris* with some difficulty, till we had crossed the slide and climbed some little distance; then we found the place we were looking for, a water-mill hanging over the stream, in a clump of chestnut trees. The whole was silent, and my companion (the 'Llustrissimo sor Marchese of a former chapter) had some trouble in unearthing the miller. Finally he appeared, and led us inside. He was a gaunt, white-faced creature, with despair in his eyes.

"Non se campa più" (It is no longer possible to live), he told us. "Look at that diabolical machine that they have put on my good old wheel!"

It was a taximeter which registered every turn of the wheel. "And on every turn I must pay," the distracted creature moaned. "And you know, Sor Marchese *mio*, that it turns many times after the corn is ground! I cannot stop it all in a minute, and I pay for the empty turns as if they were full ones. We cannot live any more! If it was for this that the angels came and saved us from the landslide, I wish we had all perished! Better drowning than starvation!"

Then he told us a strange story. He had not always

lived in the upper mill; his trade had been carried on in one below, where a bridge made it convenient for the farmers to bring him the grain from both sides of the stream. He had a wife and children, and his two brothers lived with him and helped him, for his was a fine trade then. One stormy night, when the river seemed to be unusually full, two strangers (*forestieri*), very quiet, very gentle-spoken men, had knocked at the door and asked for hospitality, which was warmly accorded. After supper, as they all sat together, the children being in bed, the strangers rose and said one word, "Come!" At first the family did not understand. Then the mill and the bridge began to tremble, the water roared alarmingly, and all the air was full of grumblings. The men and the woman were too frightened to move. The visitors never spoke again, but they lifted the children from their beds and carried them out, the parents watching as if some spell had been cast upon them. In a few minutes the silent strangers returned and led away the man and wife, returning again for the two brothers. But one of these scoffed at their precautions. The mill was trembling to its foundations, but he would not move. So they and the other brother departed and left him. The obedient one was conducted to where the remainder of the family had been bestowed in safety, on the opposite hillside, some little way farther up the steep ravine. When they were all assembled there, dazed and trembling, a deafening report thundered out, followed by the crash of falling masonry. It took the poor *contadini* a few minutes to regain their senses enough to look round. The strangers had disappeared and were never heard of again. Half the hillside had been hurled into the stream, and the unbelieving brother had been engulfed when the mill and

the bridge were swept away. There was one curious feature of the story. The rescued ones declared that the slide had taken place *before* they were conducted out of the doomed building, and that the "angels" had led them over the still trembling rocks without letting their feet touch the ground.

In spite of the general atmosphere of unrest, and the close vicinity of war to our gates, we returned to Rome towards the end of September 1860. The battle of Castelfidardo had been fought and lost; General Lamoricière had been beaten; the brave Marquis de Pimodan had been killed by a traitor[1] among his own men, and things looked very dark for the Holy Father. But the French garrisons were still in Rome, and, so long as they remained, the city itself would be safe. We Romans were very fond of our French protectors; they seemed much nearer relations than the horrid "Italians" we had been seeing in Siena.

Since I am only writing a family chronicle, and my people's little views may therefore be recorded without apology for their unimportance, I had better say here that from the time we came home that year these underwent a curious change. Perhaps the much lauded march of destructive progress was coming too near home to be quite pleasant. Rome was a delightful place to live in just as it was; and the growls of revolution doubtless reminded my mother of the bad days of 1848, which had made a deep impression on her. Be that as it may, I was aware of a growing respect around me for my hero, Pius IX., and I would sometimes hear great anxiety expressed as to what would happen should the French

[1] The man was rewarded by a lucrative appointment in Turin soon afterwards.

troops be withdrawn! It was an open secret that Napoleon III. was getting tired of the situation, which certainly was a thorny one for him. The rest of Italy had already taken up the cry "A Roma!" and, although Victor Emmanuel had always declared that the Holy Father should not be molested in his capital, his French allies knew him well enough to realize that if sufficient pressure were brought to bear upon him he would yield to it. The man was wax in the hands of the astute and resolute plotters around him. Cavour had always been held up to me as the ideal statesman, with Garibaldi as his twin; but from the day when he announced in the Parliament in Turin that Rome was the proper capital of Italy, and must be annexed as soon as possible, his halo began to grow dim in our old villa.

Children are queer creatures. The one thing I felt I could not part with was the French sentinel at our gate, and his comrades in the quarters at the corner of the Via Strozzi opposite. Ever since I could remember anything the good soldier in the baggy red trousers had stood before his little stone sentry-box to the left of our front door. He—I knew them all, and each was a friend—had smiled and nodded to me as I trotted past, dressed for the Pincio; and his bright fixed bayonet and saucy-looking kepi represented everlasting safety and protection to my mind. The men loved us, not only because we were children—and all soldiers love children—but because ever since a terribly cold winter many years before, when one poor fellow was frozen to death in the sentry-box, my mother sent down a cup of hot coffee on the stroke of twelve every night for the man on guard. It was a little thing to do, but they appreciated it.

The building they guarded was the prison for women,

and sad pale faces used to watch us from behind the heavy iron bars. Besides our own it was the only house in the whole great Piazza except the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, for which some of the still standing halls and arches of the baths of Diocletian, beyond the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, had been utilized. Beyond this, again, came the famous "Moses" fountain, always pointed out to me as an example of the terrible fate which overtakes inefficiency when allied to ambition. The artist who modelled the "Moses," in the time of our own Sixtus V., thought himself a second Michelangelo, and imagined that he had outdone that master's splendid figure in San Pietro in Vincoli. But when he saw his statue in place, too short by a foot for its stodgy breadth, he was so overcome by despair that he cut his throat!

The Piazza di Termini is so changed now that old inhabitants would have difficulty in recognizing it at all, but for the unhappy Moses, who stands where he has stood since 1587. It is quite a pleasure when I pass that way to see his ugly face again.

Two new faces appeared in Rome in that winter of 1860-61—faces which interested me deeply—those of "Bombino," Francis II. of Naples, and his beautiful, tragic-looking wife. She was a heroine; the story of her indomitable courage and persistence during the long siege of Gaeta, when she practically took command, passed most of her time on the fortifications, and did all she could to encourage and cheer the troops, had made her famous. Her husband was weak, as the Bourbons can be weak; not bad or cruel like his father and grandfather, but a gentle, discouraged creature who knew that the forces of his time were too great for him to cope

with.[1] As I remember him, he was a fair young man with pale eyes and a light moustache, and he never appeared in public except in a closed carriage. When his wife accompanied him they were always silent, and her brilliant dark eyes and small flashing face made a strange contrast to his insignificant appearance. She was a sister of Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, and once, somewhere about this time I think, the latter came down to Rome to pay her a visit. I saw them pass together one bright morning in the Piazza di Spagna, talking eagerly

[1] A stronger man than Francis II. could easily have won back the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, for, in spite of the oppressions of the young King's predecessor, "Bomba," the country people were deeply attached to the dynasty. The plebiscites obtained in Naples and Palermo, whether genuine or the reverse, in no way indicated the opinions of the remainder of the population. In 1861 the resistance throughout the kingdom of Naples took on such proportions that Victor Emmanuel was obliged to send large bodies of troops to overcome it. The people, though barely organized and poorly armed, fought stubbornly, and were assisted by such of the Neapolitan soldiers as had remained faithful to their King. When the invaders finally conquered the loyalists the latter were punished with frightful barbarity. The painstaking German historian Dr. Mühlfeld, himself an ardent liberal and an enthusiastic admirer of Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi, gives the following figures for the final engagement: 1,848 *prisoners shot at once*, 7,127 *a few hours afterwards*; 10,604 killed in the battle, and 13,620 sent to prison. Yet "historians" of to-day tell us that "the new *régime* was hailed with joyful acclamations all through the south"! There was much trouble also in Sicily, but the resistance there was less obstinate on the whole, and the chief authorities had certainly been heavily bribed. On any matter of importance one would hesitate to accept the testimony of Baron de Rimini, the spy and murderer who took pay from and betrayed almost every crowned head in Europe; but he could have had no particular motive for lying when jotting down the sums paid to himself and others for various atrocities, so there may be some truth in his casual statement that General Lanza, the Commandant at Palermo, received one million francs as the price of his surrender to Garibaldi. What is incontrovertible is that Lanza shut up his army of 25,000 men in the fortress that day, and forbade all opposition to the invaders. Two faithful officers succeeded in getting a battalion together and attempted to hold the city. They were arrested, by Lanza's orders, and treated as criminals, and their followers, to a man, publicly executed for their loyalty to King Francis.

in their little brougham. They were dressed alike, in black, with big white lace ties under their pretty chins; they wore no covering over their splendid brown hair, and the sun was shining right in their eyes. I saw the Empress of Austria many times in after-days—and knew her fairly well, too—but this was the only occasion on which I ever saw the slightest animation in her countenance.

By the time I grew up, married, and went to live in Vienna, she had become a mere statue—a very beautiful, silent automaton. While I was there, there was a question of a fresh appointment in her Household. The Empress, in her mute way, fixed on one of the available names in the list proposed to her. Her adviser suddenly remembered that the lady who bore it suffered under a serious disqualification.

"I am afraid, your Majesty, that Countess Z—— won't do. She is stone-deaf."

"Thut nix," the Empress replied. "Ich spreche nie mit meinen Damen." ("That's nothing. I never speak to my ladies.") And the appointment was confirmed.

I think Francis II. of Naples, her brother-in-law, was really relieved at being allowed to retire from public life. The annals of the two preceding reigns had been so conspicuously bad that, although the Neapolitans proper had accepted him, the Sicilians would never have done so for any length of time. Sicily has very little in common with the pleasant kingdom across the Straits of Messina. It is altogether Saracen, where it is not Greek; it has always aimed at being autonomous; and the Saracens have long memories when injuries such as they had suffered have been inflicted. The people had hated Ferdinand I., Francis I., and Ferdinand II. with

ever-increasing virulence, and had drawn down on themselves terrible retribution for their repeated attempts to throw off the oppressive yoke of the tyrants. Even to-day it is enough to mention the name of "Bomba" anywhere in the South to draw forth some expression of detestation or scorn—and, perhaps, if one is lucky, some anecdote of the amiable Ferdinand II., who earned the nickname by his orders for the bombardment of Messina (in 1848), carried out by General Filangieri, who was created Duke of Messina for the exploit.

As far north as Rome, the name of "Bomba" still evoked explosions of wrath and mockery long after I was grown up. The word is the common term for a tall hat, and if, during the licence of Carnival, any individual was daring or ignorant enough to appear in the Corso with this ornament, he was fortunate if he escaped serious hurt. I have seen the whole seething crowd, from one end of the street to the other, turn on such a one, and, with yells of "Bomba! Bomba!" pursue him with missiles of every kind till some charitable group on the pavement would open, drag him in, and spirit him away down a side street to recover as best he might from the results of his temerity.

Ferdinand's caprices were almost as unbearable as his cruelties. A friend of my brother's, the Duke of Terranova, a Sicilian magnate, told us that in his grandfather's time Ferdinand took it into his head to forbid his subjects in Sicily to harness four horses to a coach; that was a bit of ostentation that he reserved for himself, and he imposed a fine of one thousand scudi (dollars) for every horse, each time the regulation was infringed. The then Duke of Terranova refused to have his equipage thus shorn of splendour, and every day for an entire month

appeared in public in Palermo driving his coach-and-four, with a thousand-dollar note pinned to the headstrap of each horse.

Every evening when he descended at the door of his palace again after his drive, the four notes were sent to his Sovereign with his compliments, till, the month being ended, he considered that he had done enough to vindicate his independence and show his scorn of the absurd regulation. "A great old man, my grandfather!" the Duke concluded, adding, with a wry face, "That is why I am such a poor one!"

Poverty is a relative matter for dukes, and did not press very hardly on our cheery friend, I imagine. He had an exceedingly pretty wife—a Spanish Princess of sorts, who spoke little, smiled only with her eyes, and always sat bolt upright in her chair, for all the world like a queen receiving homage, except that one very Vandyke hand would rest lightly on her hip—the traditional attitude of the Spanish woman. She explained to us that from the time she could sit up at all she had never even felt the back of a chair. "That is the way girls are brought up in my country," she added proudly. Her husband was "altra pasta," as we say in Rome. He had no preoccupations about dignified deportment, enjoyed all pleasant things with engaging alacrity, told very funny stories, and laughed like a boy at anything and everything. I remember that he was much amused at my brother's account of a visit he had paid to "Mr." Nelson (the Duke of Bronte), who had a large and productive estate, run on fine English principles, in a brigand-haunted district of Sicily. In order to ensure himself and his goods from molestation the owner had to pay a yearly tribute to the outlaws, and they, in return, guaranteed

that nothing and no one on his property should ever be touched. Marion said that one of the strangest contrasts he ever beheld was that between the mediævally Italian conditions of the surroundings and the delightfully British atmosphere of the house itself, where his host's aunt, a charming old maiden lady, ruled supreme and dispensed hospitality just as she would have done in some well-regulated English country home—roast beef and plum-pudding, family prayers, early dinner on Sundays, and " the maids all in bed by ten o'clock ! "

CHAPTER XII

SUMMER LIFE IN THE ALBAN HILLS

1861—Rocca di Papa—The artistic temperament—History on the spot—The sunken barges—An independent town—Disciplined girls—Overbeck—Assunta Hoffmann—"A natural saint"—The dead Cardinal.

FROM the southern windows of the Villa Negroni I had always looked with some curiosity at a tiny village hanging against the face of a rock far above all the other hamlets of the Alban Hills. Behind it was a level terrace in the mountains on which the sun, as it sank towards the sea in the west, used to throw a carpet of gold. Behind this again, and to the right as I looked at it, rose Monte Cavo, the culminating peak of the Alban chain, its sides a mass of sombre verdure, its outline delicately gradual with the long, smooth slope that always marks an ancient crater. In the one disastrous summer of my childhood, passed at Genzano, we little ones were not included in the excursion parties of our elders, and my fairy village, Rocca di Papa, was as far away from me as ever. But in 1861 it was to become a reality, with some other quite unexpected things.

The year is marked thus in my memory of it: the American Civil War, Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," glorious liberty of soul when I was at last removed from the nursery and handed over to the governess whom I had always adored, Cavour's death, the making friends

with my hitherto unapproachable elder sisters, and then my mother's second marriage.

The war affected us in many ways. My people were of course ardent Northerners, and terribly depressed by the early victories of the Confederates. Money cost double its value; exchange was in such a condition that my mother paid $200 for every $100 she received in cash, and I shall never forget my surprise on learning that money could cost money. Expenses had to be cut down; but one delightful result of this was that, instead of making a long journey north to escape the summer heats, we were all sent up to Rocca di Papa, where an apartment was taken for us in the one big house the place then contained, the Casa Botti.

Casa Botti had a long villa garden, tumbling in uneven terraces down the hill from its lower gate, and ending in a thick wood of old chestnut-trees. On a level with the house was the village church and its churchyard, where, one bright morning, I beheld death for the first time. Two *contadine* came wandering in, carrying what I thought was a large wax doll on a pillow gaily ornamented with pink rosettes. But the doll had no pink on its cheeks, and when the priest and sacristan came out with book and vestments I understood. The thing on the pillow was a dead baby. The churchyard was paved with big flat stones that had numbers on them, and one of these had been pried up. The priest read the prayers and sprinkled the holy water. Then the tiny corpse was dropped into the hole, the stone was replaced, the woman who carried the cushion tucked it under her arm, she and her companion went away, and the funeral was over. I rushed down into the chestnut wood to try to forget all about it. The first sight of death is rather terrifying,

whether it comes when one is ten or a hundred years old.

But in spite of the close neighbourhood of the graveyard, Casa Botti was a very cheery place, and the months passed there were some of the happiest of my life, except that my dear mother was not with us. Her health had been unsatisfactory for some time past, and she had gone to Ems for a cure, leaving us four with Helen Salter, the dear bright Boston girl who had returned with us from America three years earlier—a governess of a kind that anxious parents do not seem to be able to obtain in these days of diplomas and certificates. She was very highly educated herself, and made our studies one long treat by her sympathy and imagination, and her own keen interest in everything around her. She was not in the least daunted by being put in sole charge of the family, with the tyrannical old servants to manage and that beloved handful of a girl, my sister Annie, to keep in some kind of subjection. Annie was now sixteen, and had conducted her own education for four years. As soon as she was twelve she had, with characteristic finality, informed my mother and Miss Salter that she had done with school-room lessons; they bored her, and she considered them a mere waste of time. What were geography and arithmetic to her? She was quite sure she should never require to know anything about such idiotic subjects. As for reading, she would see to that—she had never done anything else, and her room already resembled the sanctum of some middle-aged bookworm. She had her own piano—an old Erard of sweetest tone—and she played divinely. Our Danish music-master, Raunkilde, quite a famous professor in his way, said he gave her lessons for the pleasure to himself. By the time she was

fifteen she knew all he could teach her, and he advised the assistance of Sgambati, then a very young man of already marvellous attainments. Dear Mustaphà was her singing-master, and to these she had added a Latin teacher, one Sparano, who took her through the Italian classics, but did not get her far in Latin: she soon dropped that study. She really had the artistic temperament, so often claimed nowadays by the inefficient and the lazy—the people whom my mother scornfully termed "the great army of the incapables."

Annie specialized, but whatever she did was beautifully and thoroughly done. Her drawing was a delight; she had the genius of caricature, and every funny incident and quaint personality was immortalized in her note-books. A few years later she amused herself with flower painting, and treated her masses and colours with a boldness and delicacy which changed the old ladylike accomplishment into a virile art. Then, tired of the brush, she would take up her needle and paint pictures with that. She never made a design; all that was needed was the flowering branch, the posy, or the garland on the table before her, and the picture grew into the satin or linen with the rapidity of magic. She never would use new silks, and the great basket, tumbling over with hundreds of tossed and tangled skeins in the wildest confusion, would be set in the sun to mellow and fuse into shades that no money could buy. Once, after her marriage, she was bored to death in the wilds of Poland, and felt that she must invent a new art. She was wandering round the estate, and her glance fell on some of the sheets of damaged copper thrown away from the distillery which is the chief source of revenue to the West Prussian landowner.

A few weeks later my mother received a wall panel in pale gold, on which a great branch of bay stood out in splendid relief. Every leaf was modelled and veined to the life, with its sappy curves and resolute point, and the whole was executed in the dull green bronze so familiar to Roman eyes. A large mirror frame of olive leaves followed—a real work of art—and finally a note in Annie's mad-butterfly handwriting, explaining that the whole had been cut out with nail scissors (now out of commission—please send another pair), and modelled with fingers, which in consequence were really too sore to hold a pen ; and—oh, yes—the green patina had been obtained by burying the copper in the garden when the work was done.

But her crowning gift was her music, and I, who had all the amateur's emotional delight in it (the real musician is never emotional), was lifted into realms of unspeakable happiness when she played to me, as she did every evening at Rocca di Papa, to send me to sleep. My favourite "piece" was always kept for the last, the *tema* of Beethoven's Twelfth Sonata. When I hear it now I am a little girl again, snuggling down in a huge white bed in a brick-floored room, with the white curtains waving in the night breeze, and the shaded light coming through the open door leading into the *sala*—our only sitting-room, where Annie had promised to play on till she knew I was asleep. That one act of lovingkindness laid all the ghosts that had haunted me ever since the dreadful Bordentown nights, and until, some years later, Augustus Hare, the king of goblin story-tellers, invaded my peace, I was never afraid of the dark any more.

It was never very dark at Rocca di Papa, somehow. The bare, square house was all windows ; the sun caught

it at every angle. There were big "vasche," washing fountains, in the courtyard, where the *contadine* thumped our print frocks with stones and sang all the time; the kind chestnut woods were all around, carpeted in the late summer with cyclamens, each a ruby butterfly on a jacinth stem, rising from the flat leaves so mystically patterned in white and lined with crimson. The citron perfume of them filled the air in the hot afternoons with a wild oriental sweetness. I was so amused when I first went to England a year later to find cyclamens in pots, in greenhouses! That, and the price of grapes—a shilling a pound—convinced me that England was a poverty-stricken country, not even redeemed by the extraordinary cleverness of the inhabitants, who could *all* speak English, a most unusual accomplishment where I came from!

My Marion had accompanied me in the emigration to the school-room, and he and I were made very happy in the spring of that year by obtaining possession of a copy of Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome." I suppose every child loves the ring of these stirring ballads, but for us they were the chronicles of much-loved heroes and well-known places. As soon as Helen Salter got possession of us she took advantage of our natural familiarity with great names and landmarks to teach us Roman history—as it was accepted then—on the spot and from life, so to speak. Tradition was the only authority for many a moving tale; but oh, how real it all was to us! Cæsar's blood on Pompey's statue; the exact spot in the Forum where Mark Antony had stood when he began, "Friends, Romans, countrymen!" (we were not too young to know at least our Roman Shakespeare by heart); the sunken piers of Horatius' bridge; Tarpeia's rock, and the balcony whence the infamous Tullia had watched

the chariot wheels roll over her father's dead body; the terraces of the palace of the Cæsars and the mournful arches of the Coliseum,—these were our class-room, and never did eager little minds feast so joyously on instruction. When we went to Rocca di Papa we made many another excursion into antiquity. I quite refuse to believe the archæologists when they tell me that Hannibal never camped on the fern-covered plateau at the foot of Monte Cavo. I know better! That far he came, with his Carthaginian hordes, purposing to descend on Rome. And then, beholding the strength and greatness of the city, lying along the Tiber like an unsheathed sword, he turned and crept away, daunted and fear-stricken, to look for easier conquests. Marion and I spent many a summer afternoon searching for relics of him and his army among the ferns and thyme; but since we obtained no results, we grew fonder of climbing the winding Roman road which led—still leads—to the summit of the hill. Its flat stones had been worn by illustrious steps, those of victorious Generals to whom the jealous city denied a public Triumph within her walls, but who were permitted to celebrate one here. It was a long, hot walk, and when we reached the top we used to sit down and rest in the porch of the Passionist monastery which Cardinal York, the last of the Stuarts, built round and over the ruins of one of the most ancient of all temples, that of Jupiter Latiaris, where the Latins used to pray before ever Alba Longa (our own Albano) mothered Rome into being. Timidly we would ring the bell, and in a few minutes a lay brother all in black, with the white Passionist badge on his breast, would put his head out, disappear, and return with bread and wine—the everlasting elements of charity—in his hands for our refreshment.

When we had made our little offering in return, we would go and sit on the low wall of square black stones that still shut in a sacred ilex, supposed to be coeval with the temple, and look over the hills sinking away to Civita Lavinia, the Campagna, and the sea.

When we had been very good we were allowed to have donkeys and ride over to Nemi, under the guardianship of a tall, grey-haired old peasant known to us as "Oh! Sté!" I believe his name was Stefano, but as one or other of us was always in trouble with a big kicking donkey (pale coffee-colour for choice, with a black cross on its back because its ancestress had borne the Lord on Palm Sunday), the name was invariably shrieked in the wildest appellative, and the good man would hardly have known himself under any other. He used to guide us down to the very shore of the mysterious lake lying in its deep green cup, and let us get a glimpse of the two sunken barges, far, far under the water, which had floated on its surface, gay with flags and music, when, more than eighteen hundred years before our time, Caligula came here for a holiday. And then there was the "emissary," a spot of tragic interest, where the doomed slaves, who dug the tunnel to draw off the water from the swollen lake, had all been drowned as the last blow was struck and the flood rushed through. Think what all this meant to a child like my brother. Small wonder that Roman Italy was his mind's chosen home!

We were fed on Latium, steeped in its sunshine, awed by its strength, inspired by its spirit, till it was more our world than that of to-day could ever be. "To-day" has all these treasures at its disposal; but we seem to have entered at last on the real "Dark Ages," in which the intellectual poverty is so great that

the masses do not know gold for currency when they see it. I forget where it was that one of us had occasion to reward a countryman for some service with a gold piece. He looked at it dubiously for a moment and then said: "It is very pretty, but—it is not money. I think I would rather have money, please." When the same sum was counted out to him in silver and copper, he took it thankfully, and went away feeling like a millionaire.

Early memories of beauty and grandeur provide a mental capital of which all the after-disasters of life cannot diminish the value or tarnish the brilliance, and many of ours are connected with the little town on the grey rock at the foot of Monte Cavo. We passed two long happy summers there under Helen Salter's genial rule, and in our constant excursions came to know every landmark of the Alban Hills, from Marino to Velletri, from Genzano to Monte Porzio and Rocca Priora. It is a country of ever-varying scenery and interest, mounting from rich vine and olive gardens to heights covered with wide-spreading forests of oak and chestnut; the open spaces are carpeted with a turf as fine and green as any park can show; the streamlets run between banks of maidenhair and forget-me-not. And on every point of vantage for enrichment or defence stands some small mediæval town, with its castle-palace of the master, Colonna or Orsini, Sforza or Chigi or Savarelli, proud, isolated, fortified still, with its big church, its fountained square, its own little memories of independence and importance. Rocca di Papa had belonged to the Cencis, and the murder of Francesco had taken place in the castle of which now only a few traces remained. Later, I believe, the Orsini had a stronghold here, but in my day the place owned no feudal lord. No great empty palace dominated it,

and the people were of a sturdier, less servile type than the inhabitants of most of these self-contained little towns. They had a plainer costume than the Albanesi, and were proudly conservative of their own traditions. The parish priest was the great authority, and he kept his flock in splendid order, permitted no quarrels, no gaming, and no scandals. The great preoccupation in the "Castelli," as the mountain villages are called, is to keep the girls out of harm's way; I have heard the preacher say to the women: "Never mind about the men; they were made of different stuff to you! They can be sometimes bad and sometimes good. But you cannot! A woman must be either an angel or a devil; there is no place between for *her!*"

The girls as well as the men had to work in the fields at the foot of the hills—malarious stretches where it is not safe to stay after dark, but where a pair of lovers might linger unobserved. So a very strict discipline had been established. At dawn the church bells began to ring and every one in the place came to early Mass. Then the girls, formed in procession, were counted and went down the steep road, under orders to stay in twos and twos all day as they went about their work. Towards four o'clock they formed up again and re-entered, the priest standing at the entrance to the town to count them again, and be sure that none were loitering alone in danger's way as the dark came on. If one were missing I have known the good man walk four or five miles down into the country till he found her and brought her back to her anxious mother. But the others did not wait for the wandering lamb. Above the town is a "galleria," a chestnut-shaded road cut like a terrace in the rock, and leading to a church called the Madonna

del Tufo. Here a great mass of the yellow tufa fell out from the hillside one day, hundreds of years ago, and lo and behold, on its inner surface was a beautiful painting of the Madonna and the Bambino Gesù! So a church was built around it, and in my time a hermit, a Capuchin who had obtained permission to lead the life of a solitary, had installed himself in a little cell leaning up against the church, and took charge of things generally. He was such a jolly old hermit, always smiling and ready to talk to us through the bars. Along the "galleria" the maidens of Rocca di Papa came every evening in a long procession, saying the Rosary together, and singing the "Ave, Maris Stella" and "Salve, Regina," and many another beautiful old hymn, when the Rosary was ended. They were good, pretty girls, and had very sweet voices. When they had said their night prayers in the little church, they came back to the town and their mothers took them indoors—for were not the young men, those dangerous wolves, standing in knots on the Piazza, trying to make eyes at the precious lambs? And what decent man would marry a girl convicted of even returning such a glance?

There was a convent of Poor Clares close by, and they kept a free school for the little maids who were too young to work in the fields. They taught them to sew and to read, but not to write, because, they said, girls of that class would never take up a pen except to indite a love-letter, and it was wise to avoid that snare.

On one night of the summer, the 29th of June, the whole population stayed out of doors, to watch the illumination of St. Peter's, almost more beautiful at that distance than from the tower of Villa Negroni, whence I had always seen it before. As the quick southern night

came down, laying a veil of dusky purple over the wide Campagna, the outline of the dome rose up like a globe of stars from a cloudy sea, the great cross clear and argent, twenty miles away. At that distance we could not hear the cannon signal for the change; and so it came silently, as if some golden planet had dropped from the sky to set the stars aflame. And I fell asleep watching the lonely loveliness of it all from Casa Botti's windows.

The place was almost unknown to the outside world then, and only one other family from Rome had chosen it for villeggiatura. The high air, the ascetic ways of it, appealed to that holy old artist Overbeck, and he and his daughter and granddaughter rented a little house at the upper end of the town. We used to see a good deal of Assunta Hoffmann, a sweet, serious girl, more Italian than German, and her grandfather used to come and talk to us sometimes. He was a gentle, pale old man, with the most childlike simplicity of manner—a personality so transparent and candid that he hardly seemed to belong to gross humanity at all. His intense seriousness puzzled yet attracted me. He was evidently so happy, yet he seemed so awed, as if always seeing some beautiful, grave company of saints and angels invisible to us. I had numbers of engravings of his pictures, for they were always on sale at Spithöver's, the Catholic bookseller, in Piazza di Spagna, on whose ever-alluring photographs and prints we spent our entire pocket-money; but I never saw the recluse artist till we fell in with him at Rocca di Papa. He never paid or received visits in Rome, but up there he took us into grace, feeling sorry, I think, for the wild little Protestants who loved his pictures so well.

I knew that these were not the highest art—they were scarcely human enough for that—but their purity and

loveliness was very refreshing to a little mind that often felt the world was too big, and complicated, and gorgeous, to be altogether a restful place, and that reached out constantly for what was ever denied it, a sure basis of belief to build and grow upon. It seemed so strange that my dear elders were so enthusiastically approving of every beautiful thing in Catholic art—that every legend of the Madonna and the Saints should be household words among us, and yet that the heart and inspiration of it all, the religion itself, should be a condemned thing with which we must have nothing to do. How passionately I envied one of my childish friends who, a little later, became a pupil of the Sacré Cœur in Rome! There were no tormenting puzzles for her, no problems of right and wrong fighting out their helter-skelter battles by themselves in her mind! All was explained, regulated, blessed; she could take every question that came up to the kind, wise nuns, who knew so well how little girls felt about things, and who were never too busy to listen to their confidences. My life was richer than hers in a thousand ways, but even then there were moments when I would have given it all, the colour, the interest, the story-books, and the art—and the history, to be where she was—*safe*.

The absence of sufficiently definite teaching on the highest subject of all, through those early years, was a great misfortune to me, but it did not arise from any intentional neglect on the part of my dear mother. She was herself so divinely good by nature, so incapable of a base or unkind thought, that evil simply did not exist for her, until, with the changing of the times, its existence was forced upon her conviction several years later. The formless religion of her own training had nothing to do

with her spiritual education; that had been bestowed upon her as an infused grace, by which she regulated all her thoughts and actions. Her own crystal clearness of character and warmth of heart, as well as her intense humility, led her to believe that others were like her, and the sufferings of my early childhood were due to this mistake. For her, everybody was good till proved otherwise, everybody believed in God and was His beloved child; Anglican or Nonconformist, it mattered not who was around us, so long as nobody tried to draw us into the Catholicism which had for so long been anathema to her own people that even her gentle spirit had imbibed some of their unreasoning terror of it. She was, as a great Catholic authority once said to me in her later days, "a natural saint"; and he added, "She belongs to the Soul of the Church, as do all truly sincere Christians who, for one cause or another, have not grasped the necessity of belonging to the Body of the Church. Early training moulds certain minds for their entire lives. Beware of attempting to disturb your mother by persuasion or controversy now! You would only do harm. She will go straight to Heaven when she dies."

My dear little governess, Helen Salter, was another of the people who are born good; but, though I did not know it till long afterwards, her convictions were undergoing a great change at the time of which I have been writing, and when she went back to America in 1862, she became a Catholic and entered a religious order, together with her younger sister, who had charge of the education of some little friends of ours, children of a Southern family all but ruined by the Civil War. The Rocca di Papa arrangement had answered so well for us that they came and joined us there the next summer, and were a

most welcome addition to the tribe. We must all have been in extraordinarily good health and spirits, for a really ghastly happening in the house did not depress us in the least, though it shows how enormously the knowledge of hygiene has advanced since those days.

Casa Botti was a very large house, and we and our friends only occupied the second and third floors of it. On the first lived—and died—a certain Cardinal whose name I forget, but who must have been a man of most heavenly patience if he was not stone-deaf, for there were eight of us racing about over his head and up and down the stairs through all the daylight hours. Once my brother Marion tumbled out of bed in the dead of night, and came down on the bricks with a thud that brought us all shrieking from our rooms—to find the healthy little man still sound asleep on the floor! Well, the poor, good Cardinal died, and for some reason which I have never heard explained, it was found impossible to dispose of his body. On the first floor landing was a pretty chapel with wrought-iron doors, through which we could see the altar and the tall candles and a curtained picture. After the Cardinal's death we saw something else—a big black coffin just inside the bars. There it lay for five solid weeks of the Italian summer. No sanitary precautions had been taken and the coffin was an ordinary wooden casket. The horror of corruption grew more and more unbearable, but no one entered a protest of any kind. We were told to keep our handkerchiefs to our mouths as we passed the chapel, that was all; and we got so accustomed to the dreadful atmosphere that when it was particularly odious we used laughingly to warn the other children that the Cardinal was walking upstairs!

Our two governesses must have had splendid nerves.

They were in sole charge of the two establishments, while a violent epidemic of smallpox raged in the town. The one street of it sloped up from the piazza before our front door, and every time we went out we could see a long line of yellow flags fluttering from the doors of the houses where the victims were lying. Of course those who succumbed were buried in the churchyard under our windows, and though we never passed up the street, all our food came from there, to say nothing of "Oh! Sté!" with his donkeys and padded saddles. Nobody seemed at all disturbed. We were not even vaccinated afresh. The scourge died out, the Cardinal's remains were at last removed—and when the summer was over eight young people were taken back to Rome in prime condition.

Two or three weeks before that move my mother had returned to us, married to Mr. Luther Terry. He was an old friend of the family, an artist from New England, who had spent most of his life in Rome. Some definite changes naturally followed this event. For obvious reasons my mother did not care to return to Villa Negroni, and, pending the finding of another suitable house, we moved to Casa Dies (now a hotel), close to the Pincio and in the very heart of the foreign quarter. For our villa my mother found some tenants, two pleasant artistic Englishwomen, who quite understood our feelings for the place and who made us welcome when we returned, as we did day after day, to wander sadly in the gardens of our never-forgotten home. The time was not very far off when, as an adherent of the Holy Father, Prince Massimo was to be forcibly expropriated, the historic building destroyed, and the matchless gardens swept away to make room for mean and hideous streets now inhabited by the lowest classes in the whole wrecked city.

CHAPTER XIII

CAVOUR, HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS

The shadow of doom—Cavour's manifesto—Cavour's character—"A free Church in a free State," and an explanation—The Freemason programme—An instance of Masonic methods—Carducci—Napoleon III.'s responsibility for the death of Cavour—Cavour's end—Minghetti and Donna Laura—A gratuitous attack—A hopeless passion—Miss Sewell—"Garibaldi's Englishman."

MY childhood came to an end in 1862. The next three years of my life were spent at school, and the following five were so filled with interest in public events, so coloured by the course of them, that it seems strange in looking back to realize that I was only nineteen when they ended—with the crash of 1870. They were years crowded with personal joys and sorrows, and thrilling with the vitality of my own eager youth; but from the day, March 25, 1861, when Cavour, in his famous speech in the Parliament of Turin, declared that Rome was the ancient capital of Italy and must be restored to her, there was ever the shadow of doom and loss in the background, conflict around us, ruthless hostility knocking at our gates.

Cavour's manifesto sounded like truth to foreigners, who, in their blank ignorance of history, assumed that the chief city on Italian soil had naturally once been the capital of the country. But it was a direct contradiction of fact. Rome ceased to be the capital of Italy when she ceased to be the capital of the world. Never in any

single chronicle after the fall of the Roman Empire was the city alluded to in the sense of Cavour's statement. That statement gave profound dissatisfaction in Turin and all through the northern provinces, anxious to keep the centre of power at home. But the project had been from the first clearly formed in the minds and counsels of the makers of the Italian Revolution, and it was given to Cavour to proclaim it to the world in almost his last public speech. He died a few weeks afterwards, but his colleagues, Minghetti and Mamiani, faithfully carried out his programme and did their best to complete his work.

Cavour's character is a difficult one to understand if judged by his actions alone. It presents contradictions which alternately plead for and against his sincerity. I think that, like some greater men, he was sincere in his very contradictions—detesting and persecuting the Church with the zeal of an iconoclast, yet believing in his frightened soul that only she held the keys of Heaven and of Hell, and that final rebellion against the faith meant an eternity of desolation and pain. He lived excommunicate; he formed with his fellows a plan of attack upon Religion which only the religious loyalty of Italians has defeated so far, but which is now in effect to the letter in France—yet he could not die without a priest. He begged for the Sacraments and received them—and then once more pronounced his war-cry, "Libera Chiesa in libero Stato," with his last breath.

It is a task beyond human power or jurisdiction to unravel the complication of motives which ruled his mind in such quick and stormy alternation; but the axiom "A free Church in a free State" requires the explanation which Cavour did not think prudent to give except to his deeply initiated fellow-workers, who, less cautious,

speedily divulged it to a scandalized world. It is word for word the Freemason programme embodied in the Loi Briand to-day. Here is a rough sketch of the main points, drawn from the public speeches and writings of its supporters.

The Church is a mere private association dependant for its existence on the good-will and protection of the State.

The Church cannot own property of any kind. All moneys, endowments, buildings, as well as all the accessories of ritual, belong only to the State. These shall be put into the hands of lay commissioners, who shall pay all bishops, parish priests, and other functionaries what they see fit.

The Church shall not nominate its own functionaries. The people shall elect their own bishops, etc., and deprive them of office when they choose.

All religious orders must be suppressed.

No ecclesiastics may be employed in the education of children, and religion shall be entirely banished from that domain.

The Catholic Faith shall be ranked with all other forms of religion, and shall in no way take precedence of Protestantism, Judaism, or any other association of belief or non-belief.[1]

How many of those who still applaud Cavour's war-cry have ever taken the trouble to inquire what it means? What tiny schismatic community in a country village in England or America would submit to the robbery and oppression which he had the lying audacity to offer to the Church under the name of Freedom?

[1] For further details see "Le plan de la Franc-maçonnerie en Italie et en France," par Léon Dehon (Paris, Lethielleux).

The Italians, renegades though they might be, rose up as one man to forbid the outrage even before Pius IX. had spoken, and, whatever their political opinions regarding the Papacy, they have, through the length and breadth of the land, echoed his protests and those of his successors. They were not lured by the promises of spoil which have recently weighed with their French neighbours, who, poor cheated fools, must be wondering to-day where all the stolen treasure has gone to. To cite one instance alone, when the Trappists were banished from France, they left property to the value of forty million francs, built up through centuries of industry (which has greatly enriched the country) and through the endowment of wealthy persons who had a legal right to dispose of their own goods as they pleased. When the money—which had been promised for old-age pensions—was finally paid into the Treasury, exactly seven francs and fifty centimes remained!

With the evidence now to hand it is impossible any longer to maintain that Cavour had not planned and hoped for a similar spoliation of the Church in Italy. It is equally impossible to justify or explain his mental attitude. He was not a Satanist like Carducci, the appointed laureate of the party, but he had long been a Freemason of a high degree, and that, in Italy or France, means an open hater of all religion. Yet he refused to die without the Sacraments—and, having received them (through the indulgent charity of a priest who risked his own future career in administering them to a non-reconciled excommunicate), he once more proclaimed himself an enemy of the Church. The most charitable and probable supposition is that his mind, confused and weakened by the approach of death, reverted without

conscious volition to long-established trains of thought after the clearer interval when he had sought and found reconciliation with his Maker. Otherwise the aspect of that death-bed would be apt to recall Lacordaire's criticism on Lamennais' wild socialist epic in which he makes the victorious populace celebrate the Sacrament in the blood of kings: "C'est la Révolution qui fait ses Pâques."

Napoleon III., with his greed of territory, was humanly responsible for Cavour's death. On May 30, 1861, the latter attended for the last time a session of the Parliament in Turin, in which a railway contract which he had been arranging was discussed. The proceedings had included the question of a loan of 500,000 francs for the purpose; but in the midst of the debate Cavour suddenly received news that the contract had broken down, and he left the House, in a very angry mood and complaining of headache.

When he reached his home the servant who admitted him handed him a letter, and recounted afterwards that he was much alarmed at the impression that it made on the Count. While reading it he turned first red, then deathly pale, and tossed it to the ground with an inarticulate exclamation. Immediately afterwards he stooped, picked it up, and put it into his pocket. From that moment he became seriously ill with congestion of the brain.

The letter was from Napoleon III.; and its purport is said to have been to the effect that Italy was and must remain tributary to the Emperor of the French; and that, in any case, Sardinia must be ceded to France. The communication seems to have been unexpected, and dealt a terrible blow to the statesman's hopes. He at once fell a prey to a violent fever. By the 3rd of June

he was delirious; and then came a most anxious time for his associates, who dreaded that some hint of their secret plans and methods might drop from his unconscious lips. Every word was hung upon, and minute precautions taken to prevent anything he said from becoming public property. The British Representative, Hudson, was one of those who watched by that distressing death-bed, and I believe it is to him we owe the few details we have of it.

"Italy," "Rome," "Venice," "Napoleon"—these were some of the names the sufferer pronounced in his delirium; and also the sentences: "I will not have a state of siege," "Italy must rise up again through Freedom," "Italy cannot go down in failure." On June 5th he regained consciousness, but was much weaker; and his brother sent for Padre Giacomo to administer the last Sacraments. It was after receiving them that he repeated to the priest his oft-quoted aphorism "A free Church in a free State." He soon became unconscious again; but his mind cleared a few moments before his death. Early in the morning of June 6th he stretched out his hand to Marco Minghetti, who was sitting by his bedside, and said "Tutto è salvo!" ("Everything is saved!") These were his last words. A little later he passed away—having sown seeds of which, if Heaven is merciful, he cannot now behold the fruits.

His friend Minghetti, the most rabid of Church persecutors, was in private life a shy, melancholy man, much dominated by his brilliant and altogether adorable wife; and, I used to think, rather frightened by her crowds of too æsthetic friends. He was still a pillar of Radicalism when I was thrown into his society (long

after it had been proved that his attempts to corrupt the conscience of the Italians had failed on one point at least), and I was so fond of Donna Laura that it was not possible to feel much resentment against the somewhat broken, discouraged man who was never known in Rome except as "Povero Marco"—his wife's invariable formula when speaking of him.

He was under orders to appear, at least sometimes, at her famous Sunday receptions; and he would wait till the room was crowded with worshippers, and some virtuoso, Liszt or Sgambati or Rubinstein, was sitting at the piano holding us all spellbound; then Povero Marco, stooping to dissimulate his great height, would slink in, look despairingly for an acquaintance near the door, and cling to the acquaintance for support, taking no notice of any one else until, his twenty minutes' ordeal being ended, he would vanish, and be seen no more in that saturnalia of High Art for two or three weeks. Donna Laura received in a salon as big as a church, lighted by clere-story windows, and surrounded, at their level, by a gallery on which palms and stuffed peacocks, oriental tapestries, and Turkish brasses made a kind of hanging garden *à la* Gulistan. Downstairs, so to speak, the body of the church was occupied by a grand piano, groves of palms and ferns shading the most enchanting corners just big enough for two, statues, pictures on easels, Cinquecento cabinets, photographs of all the Royalties of Europe affectionately signed and mounted in truly monarchical frames, antiques of all sorts, and chairs and divans to accommodate the hostess's unnumbered friends. Nothing smaller than a fair-sized church would have held it all—and us. Under each window was an alcove; and these were Donna Laura's private chapels. In one was

her studio, another contained her books—yet a third was the confessional, where many and many a young married woman whispered her troubles and temptations into the priestess's sympathetic ear, and received the kindest and wisest of counsels in return.

"Donna Laura" (no one ever called her Madame Minghetti) was the granddaughter of an Irish exile born in France, who rose to be Prime Minister of the kingdom of Naples in the time of the great Napoleon. His son, Admiral Acton, still kept in touch with his Irish relations; and "Donna Laura" was rather proud of her British descent, and had made various visits to England. A very old diplomatist who knew her in her early youth told me that he saw her during the first of these, and that he never met a girl of such enchanting originality. They were all staying at a certain famous house, and Donna Laura, far from being impressed with the tremendous atmosphere of the place, gave her opinions on it and all things English with amusing frankness. "She was an everlasting surprise to us all," he said. "Quite irrepressible—nobody ever knew what she would do or say next! But she was so pretty and charming that it was impossible to take offence; and we missed her dreadfully when she went away."

The irrepressibleness must have been the result of blissful ignorance of the semi-religious awe with which the British mind regards these great historical establishments. "Yes, I am going to Hatfield again," said a girl I used to know, a peer's daughter with two or three big homes of her own. "Thank heaven, mother will meet me at the station! If I had to arrive at that house alone I should sit down on the doorstep and cry!"

There was nothing at all British in Laura Acton's

personality. In appearance she was a Southern Italian with a dash of gipsy—a good and beautiful example of a type of which Princess Metternich showed the opposite extreme. I have never met two women so alike and yet so unlike. They had the same amazing gipsy eyes and olive skin, the same graceful natural figures, the love of music, the utter contempt of public opinion—the for ever nameless quality which made each the chief personage in the room, whether it were a private salon or an Imperial ball-room. But whereas the Metternich was repulsively plain and her atmosphere so "antipatico" that I used to fly whenever I saw her approaching and felt physically ill one day when she slipped her arm through mine, Donna Laura was one of the most restful and sustaining persons I ever came across, always noble and delicate, so that her outspoken verdicts on men and things carried conviction without the slightest sense of shock. She never spoke of politics ; I think they were rather a sore subject with her, for she was a devout though very silent Catholic ; but on every other topic that came up she had something true or witty to say. Her passion for music and her worship of great musicians, whether composers or instrumentalists, did not obfuscate her views in other directions. These were judicially clear and sensible, and she possessed that highest of social virtues, she was of her time. She loved and understood her nineteenth century, and had in a supreme degree the quality which makes for happiness, a keen sympathetic interest in everything around her. Yet she had suffered much ; her first marriage had been a bitterly unhappy one, and the two children of it, a son and a daughter, had caused her great anxiety. But she had found the companion she needed in Marco Minghetti, and all

his violent radicalism seemed powerless to disturb the harmony of their relation to one another. When I knew her her character was mellowed to great peace and gentleness by time, and she was looking steadily forward, refusing to be disturbed by the memory of past storms. "Je m'efface, ma chérie," she said to me once when we were discussing the most frivolous of questions, the tints of some Eastern crapes that I wanted her to wear; "let me have the twilight colours near me—they are all so harmonious to me now." But the old radiant smile was in her eyes as she spoke, and I thought of Théophile Gautier's lines to Charles Nodier when the latter humorously complained that his hair was turning white with age: "These are not the snows of age, my friend, but the first blossoms of the Eternal Spring!"

She had been assailed by many temptations, for even in her later years she could not divest herself of the unconscious sovereignty some women are born to exercise over the hearts of men, but the one theme on which she grew really grave was the pursuit of young married women by the masculine freelances of society. Once she heard that a very pretty and very unhappy woman, an intimate friend of mine, was in danger of this kind. Without waiting for a moment Donna Laura drove to her house, asked to see her alone, and entreated her to put all personal feeling aside and be staunch to her duty. "All the rest will pass, my dear," she said; "only be patient, and you and your husband will outgrow this trouble and come to understand one another. He is the only person from whom you have a right to demand anything. Believe me, the man who makes love to a married woman is the most hopelessly selfish animal that exists. He will take everything, and never assume a responsibility.

What he means is to have all the happiness and pleasures of married life without assuming one of the cares or duties which give it all its stability and dignity."

The last message I had from this dear woman came to me just as I was leaving Europe for Japan in 1889—a little sheaf of drawings from her own hand, each speaking of a Roman memory—a bit of the Tiber beyond St. Peter's, a spray of almond blossoms, and a charmingly Raphaelesque angel, under which she had written, "Al Ciel ti guidi" (May he guide thee to Heaven). When I returned to Italy she had passed away, and I felt that the most representative woman of my time was gone. That she was this must be my excuse for lingering so long over her memory, on which an American writer made an utterly gratuitous attack in a story where her portrait was drawn with a brutal personality unusual even in the literature of the day. For fear that this should not be clear enough, her house, her rooms, everything about her was described with the cynical exactness of the Yellow-journalist, and then a story was related in which the "elderly sorceress," as the writer called her, deliberately ensnared the affections of a good, high-minded young American engaged to an equally spotless New England girl. The girl, *en vraie Américaine*, refuses to be deprived of her faithless lover, beards the sorceress in her den, and after a torrent of fine Puritan reproaches for her cruelty and immorality, insists on having him given back to her; a demand of which the sorceress perceives the justice and which she finally grants. What the good young man thought about it was not recorded—the author had apparently overlooked the fact that it takes two to make a bargain.

I do not think that Donna Laura was aware that such

people as stray Americans existed socially, at all. The country's representatives in Rome—and elsewhere—have not of late years been drawn from a class which could impress a foreigner with the fact. I never met a single compatriot of mine in her house. The days when such men as Lowell, Motley, Longfellow, Bayard Taylor, and Agassiz came and went in my own home, were past when the change of Government brought Marco Minghetti from Turin to Rome ; and the only conclusion to be drawn from the unkind diatribe is that the writer, whether man or woman, had been unable to obtain an invitation to the reunions in which Madame Minghetti gathered her friends but never included a churl or a bore.

As Rome is the "Mother of all the orphans," and bores are the orphans of Society, I must confess that they had a tendency thither, particularly English bores, those queer, loquacious creatures of one dimension whose mental excursions have never led them above or below the single straight line of their own experience. They began to invade us, as far as I remember, just about 1861, the date of my stepfather's advent, and somehow found their way into my home. Up to that time my own impressions of Britishers had been chiefly formed by watching the Prince of Wales sitting very near me in the English church outside the walls, on Sundays, during his visit to Rome. I think he was eighteen or nineteen then, a very pretty boy with bright eyes, not always fixed on the preacher. He occupied, of course, the place of honour facing the chancel, and ours was the first at right angles to it, so I had ample time for observation during the endless sermons of the fiery old parson, Mr. Woodward, who had lived so long on sufferance in

an enemy's camp that he had the bearing of a discouraged drill sergeant and the tones of a leader of a forlorn hope. The Prince was very good all through the prayers; but when it came to the sermon he would take one glance at Colonel Bruce, his tutor (a grey-haired old soldier, who always looked straight before him), and then, reassured, would slowly turn round and search the congregation for a pretty face on which to rest his weary eyes. Alas, there were so few! I could sympathise with his disappointment when scores of beaming old maids and loyal dowagers would crane forward into his line of vision, all eager to catch a glance from the Heir to the Throne! And at those moments I could hear behind me the heartbroken sighs of a sentimental young friend of ours, an American girl, who had conceived a hopeless passion for the Fairy Prince. Like the young lady in "Lothair," she "lived for the emotions," and her worship for the royal young gentleman led her into the wildest extravagances. She would follow him as he was dragged about to see the sights of the town, would pick up a pebble that his foot had touched or a weed that he had brushed in passing, and possessed quite a collection of such precious mementos, over which she wept copiously in her spare time. She was perfectly frank about her infatuation, and during the Carnival some one whom we knew played a cruel joke on her, sending her a box of bonbons and some flowers "with the kind regards of Albert Edward." The hoax sealed her fate. She knew, poor child, that she was outwardly unattractive, but she was sure the Prince had perceived the beautiful, loving heart within. Her joy over his supposed gift was so overwhelming that the perpetrator of the fraud never had the courage to undeceive her. She returned to her native country in proud elation

of soul, and, I think, really for the Prince's sake, remained single all her life.

The next English person whom I looked at with interest was Miss Elizabeth Sewell, who came to see my mother once or twice before we left the Villa Negroni. An arrangement, of which I knew nothing at the time, was made, and in September 1862, just after the birth of a little half-sister, my own sister Jennie and I were sent to England to continue our education under Miss Sewell's direction.

I had travelled so much already that I found the journey rather uninteresting, except for one man whom we met on the steamer between Civita Vecchia and Marseilles. This was "Garibaldi's Englishman," a mysterious personage to whom my nurses had sometimes threatened to hand me over when I was naughty. He was known all over Italy by that title alone, but was never mentioned, so far as I have seen, in any contemporary records. He was a gentleman, one of the "Legion that never was 'listed" who, out of sheer admiration for the last of the Condottieri, attached himself to Garibaldi, guarded, followed, served him with whole-hearted devotion for several years. Nobody ever learnt his name or his history; he came out of nowhere and had disappeared again into the void when, in 1867, the outlaw in the red shirt descended upon us in Rome, and stalked through the city disguised as a woman. I never heard of Garibaldi's Englishman again after the day when I saw him in the flesh, in earnest talk with my stepfather (who was escorting us to England), leaning against the rail of the vessel and looking out over the Mediterranean with a sad, puzzled expression. He was a tall man with greyish hair, "ancestral" features, and blue eyes, very

upright and soldierly, dressed in rough tweeds and wearing a soft cap. He had a trick of clasping his hands behind him (nice, hard, white hands they were), and then suddenly looking round as if to meet an attack. I was lying on a bench, very limp and seasick, the last time I saw him do this ; his eyes met mine, and a funny little smile of amusement and pity suddenly lit up his good, grave face. I have often remembered him and wondered who he was, and where he went to when the dark took him.

CHAPTER XIV

AN OLD-FASHIONED ENGLISH EDUCATION

Bonchurch—The three Aunts—"Cranford" and a bar sinister—Early Victorian principles—The Swinburnes—"Poor dear Lady Jane"—A sight of the Queen—The marriage of the Prince of Wales—The Queen's bonnets—Switzerland—Princess Solms-Braunfels—Prince George and spiritualism—English country life—Annesley—Relics of Mary Chaworth—Old resentments—Doctor Howe's memories of Byron—The house with a burden—Oxford.

I HAVE said elsewhere that there are few trials in life for which I cannot find consolation in new scenery, and my pleasure in the English surroundings to which I was now introduced did much to lessen the pain of leaving my mother and my Roman home. Miss Sewell and her sisters lived in Bonchurch, the prettiest spot in the pretty Isle of Wight; and their roomy house, with its unusually large and well-kept garden, was like a picture out of one of my favourite books. The soft sea climate was kind and balmy when we arrived early in September. Most of the flowers were new to me, but they grew in profusion along the embowered walks and on the soft, turfy lawns. There were big old trees, and a series of terraces, each green and shaded, climbed up the precipitous hill behind the house in long flights of stone steps; and when one had surmounted the last of these, one came out on the spicy wind-swept down with the good English sky overhead and the blue and silver of the Channel stretching away below.

Indoors things were quite as cheerful and friendly. My sister and I found ourselves installed in a great airy bedroom furnished with bright chintz. A large bow-window gave us the sun all day, and a wide view of the sea. There was an open fireplace where, for little Italians who might feel the cold, a grand fire was always lighted for us in the evenings, and the walls were hung with good water-colours from the hand of Miss Ellen, the artist of the family.

But, for the habits and atmosphere of the place, I felt, during the first few months, that it would have been a comfort to have a dictionary. It was utterly foreign to anything I had so far experienced. I felt myself in the grasp of a discipline so powerful that there was no escaping from it even in thought, so exacting morally that I was always racing breathlessly to catch up with it, and yet so convincing and admirable that I could not be happy till I had fulfilled its demands. I had no complaints to make about indefiniteness now; in that little world there was never any doubt about belief or duty. The religion was Anglican and thorough; the manners those of my own dear mother; the language pointed and pure; and the morals so high and honourable that, during all my stay under that kindly roof, I cannot remember one case of deception or fibbing on the part of the girls, or one expression of suspicion or disbelief, or a single act of injustice, on the part of the authorities. If we broke the rules, as of course we did, we were expected to report ourselves when we brought our "registers" to be filled up in the evening. These were large bound copy-books in which every day of the week for the term had a page to itself, with hours and studies written down. There were marks for each lesson and classes of totals—"Very

good," "Good," and (foul disgrace) "Tolerable." Two bad marks on one day counted as a "Tolerable," and to have that written at the foot of the column was a misfortune that cast its shadow over life for weeks afterwards. There were no punishments of any kind. We found full reward or retribution in Miss Ellen's smile or frown on Saturday evenings when, one by one, she received us alone to inspect our registers. She was the last authority in that direction. Miss Elizabeth—God bless her!—looked after our tiresome little characters, watched them with such wisdom and affection that she held all our hearts in her hand; and Miss Emma, an invalid who never left her couch, the youngest of the three sisters, was the smiling recipient of all our hopes and plans and confidences. To her pretty room we might run whenever we liked, draw the worn stool up to the side of the prison sofa, and "just talk."

As aides-de-camp formed and trained in the service, there were two nieces, Eleanor and Emily, always with us in our studies. We called them by their Christian names, and they were like kind, jolly, elder sisters advising, warning, directing, and most comradewise playing with us, all day long. Masters came for special subjects, and there were seven or eight maids under Mrs. Chambers, the great old cook-housekeeper, who fed and cossetted us till we were as full of health and spirits as young colts prancing round the paddock. This big establishment was kept up for the benefit of only seven girls—the good ladies would never take more—of whom I was the youngest, and Mattie Chaplin (afterwards Lady Radnor) the eldest; and if we were not good and healthy and happy it was not the fault of our unique guardians. They were very indignant if "Ashcliff" was called a

school. It was a family home. They had begun by undertaking the education of some nieces whose parents had to live in India ; and as the nieces grew up, and Miss Elizabeth Sewell's books for the young came to be widely appreciated, one friend and another had prevailed upon them to take in young daughters, and so the place had become much sought after. The vacancies were filled up years beforehand. One delightful touch shows the ruling thought of it. Since to the first pupils the Misses Sewell had been " Aunt Ellen," " Aunt Elizabeth," and " Aunt Emma," so they remained for every girl who came. And of all who passed under their hands during their forty years or so of tuition, I think there is not one left to-day who would not feel tears of affection and gratitude rise to her eyes if somebody spoke of the " Aunts."

The two eldest had travelled abroad, and had many friends and correspondents in the outside world. Aunt Elizabeth was devoted to Miss Yonge, a very kindred spirit, whom all young people of those days loved for her delightful books and helpful histories. But the outside world had nothing whatever to do with the mental attitude of the dear Aunts. That had been assumed for good and all in the early Victorian era; they were receptive but conservative, too, to the last degree, keeping proudly to those old standards of delicate refinement, narrow but staunch religious belief, decorous lawfulness in every detail of the conduct of life. The minutiæ of our education would seem laughable to growing girls now. We were taught how to write notes to our equals, invitations, acceptances ; inquiries for invalids, characters of servants, letters to our elders, and letters to strangers whom we were supposed not to have met ; letters to

tradesmen—in the rigid third person; every form of correspondence which we were likely to need in after-life. My husband often said that he owed a great deal to the Aunts, for they had made of me a secretary whom he could trust to answer twenty letters in an hour, without either telling an untruth or making a definite statement in any one of them—quite a desideratum in some situations!

My mother wished me to play whist properly, and I was taught the game so thoroughly that I could take a hand with my elders, without disgrace, by the time I was thirteen, and have often had occasion to be grateful for the accomplishment. Everything was thought of. We had to learn how to enter a crowded room with quiet self-possession. Aunt Ellen would be the hostess sometimes, and one was sent back again and again into the passage till one could enter smoothly and gracefully, seek out the hostess with one's eyes as one made the first step, and go up to pay one's respects to her before so much as exchanging a glance with any one else in the room. We were asked to do tiresome little things, open a window, place a chair for an elder, remove an empty teacup, all without the slightest jar or noise, and smiling pleasantly the while. Mrs. Jones, the dancing-mistress, put us through exercises which taught us not to worry about our movements. I remember her pathetic entreaty to our long-legged, fast-growing squad of "*Backfische*": "Be willowy, young ladies, for heaven's sake be willowy! Look at Miss Spencer Smith!"

Miss Spencer Smith, poor child, was the only naturally willowy one among us, pretty as a picture, with big grey eyes and hair reaching to her knees; and she was as sweet and gentle as she was pretty. She seemed strong

enough then, but a few years later she died of consumption—the scourge for which no cure had been discovered "back" in the 'sixties.

The division of time in that place was a marvel. Madame Craven says in some place that "Time is like money; it multiplies in the hands of those who know how to use it." The Aunts certainly had this knowledge. We did not have to be in the school-room till 7.30; there, plates of bread-and-butter, and in winter a warm fire, awaited us; an hour of study; prayers; breakfast (a great meat meal that made me open my eyes in amazement when I first beheld it); hours and hours of lessons, out of which one hour was always taken for playing in the garden sometime in the morning to "freshen" us up; the leisurely dinner (at which if we did not want second helpings to roast joints, puddings, pies, *and* beer, the Aunts looked anxious and sent for the doctor to prescribe a tonic); a two hours' walk—by ourselves, if you please, with any chosen companion, so that we might really enjoy it; afternoon tea; two more hours of study; a careful evening toilet; the highest of high teas, where everybody chattered all the time and the girls cut the vast cakes to suit themselves; then the great treat of the day, the evening spent in the big pretty drawing-room, extravagantly lighted, while one of the elders read aloud and we occupied our fingers with our own pretty work; bed at 9.30, and the "sound child sleeping that the thunder cannot break," till the morning brought the maids with our hot baths, and we plunged joyfully into a new day!

The readings gave us in turn Walter Scott, Fenimore Cooper, Bulwer Lytton, Mrs. Gaskell, and other writers suited to all our ages; Dickens was "vulgar and squalid," and Thackeray considered too complicated for our minds;

but we got a good solid taste in early Victorian literature, than which there is none more wholesome, I yet believe; still, the only unpleasant incident of my whole stay in Bonchurch was connected with the evening readings. The book in question was "Cranford," and we were all electrified when Aunt Elizabeth came to a full stop in the beginning of the part where the nephew plays a practical joke—something connected with a baby—on the old ladies. "I will leave this out," said Miss Sewell, looking quite stern. Then she turned the page and took up the story further on.

Naturally we were all consumed with curiosity to know what she had left out. Among our number was a new girl, the first the exclusive Aunts had ever received from a family "in business." They had the most profound distrust and dislike of everything connected with trade, however wealthy and respectable. For some reason they had been prevailed upon to let this outsider into their charmed circle of well-born lambs, apologizing to us all for doing so. I believe they wrote to our parents for permission first. Poor Rosie was a good-natured girl with gorgeous clothes, and we were not at all ill-disposed towards her in the beginning. But when, her first shyness overcome, she proudly informed us over school-room tea that *her* Mamma always put on a silk dress and a lace collar in the afternoon, we exchanged glances, for we knew how it would end. We had never noticed whether *our* Mothers wore silk or sackcloth—whatever they did was right in the eyes of the world. Well, "Cranford" was left on the table in the drawing-room where some of us did our piano-practising. It never would have struck the Aunts to put the book away. Alas, poor Rosie could not resist the temptation. When I came into the room the

next morning I found her devouring the forbidden page. She began to tell me all about it—I took the book into my hands, realized that I was about to do a basely dishonourable thing, flung it down and rushed away in an agony of shame and repentance, and, forgetting that I was condemning my companion too, poured out my remorse in the Aunts' ears.

Oh, that was a terrible day! We all cried ourselves blind; nobody wanted any dinner. All the girls came forward to plead for the culprit, confessing that they had been "just dying" to do the same thing. But the Aunts were relentless. It was all their fault, they said. Rosie, with her bar sinister of trade, had had no opportunity of learning what honour meant, and they should never have taken her in. They were very sorry for her, but she must leave Ashcliff.

Which she did, poor girl, and we thought the sentence terribly severe. But our respect for early Victorian principles was enormously increased, and the sense of having in desire, at least, shared the banished one's crime, kept us all very humble for a long time afterwards.

The march of time can never invalidate the traditions which Miss Sewell and her sisters upheld so nobly; and those who are charged with the bringing up of girls would do well to study "Principles of Education," by E. M. Sewell, a book published, I think, in the 'sixties, where her own views are very clearly and convincingly given. One of the nieces married Doctor Hawtrey, and when the dear ladies, who all lived to a great age, laid aside their beneficent work, she took it up in a home of her own, where she was still continuing it a few years ago, and, for anything I know to the contrary, may be doing so now. Of course such women as these had their

little prejudices: one was their dislike of French ideas, which, even in those days, appeared to them flippant and demoralizing. I once showed Aunt Ellen a photograph of the Empress Eugénie, whom I admired immensely. Aunt Ellen glanced at it, and put it aside, saying, "She may be pretty, my dear, but I cannot believe her to be either virtuous or a lady—I am told she has worn a bright red ball-gown!"

The Aunts were very human, ready enough to smile at the bubbling nonsense which is such a necessary element of healthy young life; but if it passed the bounds of good taste they had a dry, humorous way of pulling us up which made more impression than anything else could have done. Some of the girls had brothers from whom they picked up little slang expressions, upon which we all fastened avidly. One of the maids was particularly popular with us, and one day Aunt Ellen heard me call her a "jolly brick." With her kindest smile she remarked, "My dear, I approve of your sentiments for Harriet; but I should be glad to hear you translate them into better English."

I thought for a moment, and then asked if "hilarious fragment of masonry" would meet the case. "Very correctly put," replied Aunt Ellen; "but since it makes too long a name for daily use, I advise you to call her 'Hilary'"; and "Hilary" the good soul was, ever after.

Also, they had what they considered a proper respect for the hierarchy of the British aristocracy. A large and beautiful place near us belonged to the Swinburnes. We girls were allowed to roam about there sometimes; but we felt that there was some tragic family secret connected with it, because the Aunts often spoke of its mistress

with such reverent sympathy. "Poor dear Lady Jane," they would say. "Algernon has broken her heart!" Of course none of the naughty boy's naughty poems ever found their way into our chaste abode, and I am sure the Aunts had never read a word of what he wrote. All that I gathered of his crimes was that he had red hair, which he wore much too long, and that he kept late hours and was a good deal away from home. I concluded that "Lady Jane" must be a person of most distinguished sensibilities.

It happened that Mattie Chaplin had a relative who was also a Lady Jane (Bouverie), so I asked her whether her aunt would take such trifling misfortunes as the other Lady Jane's so deeply to heart? Wise Mattie rather thought she would; the nicer people were, the more they must feel the disgrace of red hair and late hours, and all the rest of it. Still the thing puzzled me, and I could not quite rid myself of the suspicion that the troubles of Mr. Algernon Swinburne's Mamma might not have appealed so strongly to my instructors' sympathies had she not been the daughter of a peer. There were some other friends of theirs whose names called forth the same dignified deference, "The Ladies Nelson," whom the Aunts had known in their youth, and who lived out their lives of quiet English gentlewomen somewhere on the opposite side of the Isle of Wight, whither one or other of the sisters used periodically to travel to visit them. There was one person who, it seemed, could do no wrong—the Queen. She was still immersed in the seclusion to which she retired after the death of the Prince Consort in 1861, and few of her subjects had the chance of seeing her; but one day she came unexpectedly over from Osborne, and drove through Bon-

church in an open carriage and bowed to us, and we were given to understand that our future lives could hold no greater honour. All I saw was a sad-eyed lady in heavy black draperies, with a cross-looking little girl—the Princess Beatrice—on the seat beside her, and I was rather disappointed.

Soon after this (in 1863) came the marriage of the Prince of Wales, and we had a whole holiday and every kind of rejoicing, public and private, to celebrate the event. The British are a queer people, as I have had plenty of opportunity to discover since. Let Royalty show the slightest inclination to violate private rights or courtesies —even drive through a park without permission—the Britisher will rise up and summon Royalty for trespass on the spot, just as he would summon a cheap tripper; but let Royalty (his own, of course, for he regards foreign sovereigns as mere poor relations of the English ones) appeal to him for support and sympathy in joy or sorrow, he will take the coat off his back and the bread out of his mouth to make adequate response. The nation went mad with joy over the "Viking's daughter from over the sea"; her pretty ways, her lovely face, took all hearts by storm; the photographers could not print her portraits fast enough to satisfy the eager demand. All our pocket-money, I know, for a long time, went in making a collection of these; and when we looked at her graceful frocks and beautifully curled hair, we found it hard to believe what was generally said, that she had been so simply brought up that she had never had a silk dress before her marriage, and that the Queen, anxious about her daughter-in-law's appearance in her adopted country, had thought it wise to send a couple of bonnets down to the steamer, that she might have something

fashionable to land in. With all her infallibility in other directions, the Queen's taste in bonnets was understood to be limited, and I have always regretted that I could not see the contents of those two bandboxes. I wonder what dainty Princess Alexandra thought of them!

On her wedding day, the 10th of March, I tasted champagne for the first time in my life, for her health—and the Prince's—were drunk at the Aunts' table with all the honours. The association, in part at least, was perhaps not an inapt one.

In the summer of that year my mother sent for us to join her in Switzerland during our summer holidays. The trusty Mademoiselle Guillot was sent to fetch us, to the great envy of our schoolfellows, none of whom had been abroad. We stayed a day or two in Rouen on the way, with an old French lady (a friend of Mademoiselle's, who stuffed us with "sucre de pomme," a honey-coloured sweet of adamantine hardness), and we were taken to see all the sights of the historic town. I carried away an impression of sea-foam tracery carved in marble, throwing up spires like frozen fountains against a dazzling sky; of stained-glass windows (the first I had ever seen, for we had none in our Roman churches), where saints and warriors seemed painted in wine and amber and sapphire, shone through by the sun; of stout cheerful women in starched white caps and noisy sabots; of hum and brightness sweeping and surging through narrow streets and round the grey stone feet of very, very old buildings that had been the homes of fair queens and famous warriors. Then we went on, and soon afterwards had reached an enchanting eyrie in the high Alps, Seelisberg auf Sonnenberg, above the Lake of Lucerne, a fairyland of turf and pine forests, alpenrosen and edelweiss.

My dear mother was there, and Marion, all the family, as well as our old playmates from Virginia with their black "mammy"; and the two months were a dream of happiness, unalloyed by the fact that Mademoiselle declared that Jennie and I spoke atrocious French and at once undertook to correct our defects. She organized an out-of-doors class in the mornings, and galloped us through two thick tomes of Noël et Chapsal before the summer was ended. We were really afraid to tell her that Miss Sewell's good British distrust of Frenchmen made her refuse to have one enter the house, and that our teacher in that language bore the un-Gallic name of Herr von Hacht—that he had yellow German whiskers, the most military bearing, and had lost the use of one hand in fighting some forgotten German battle. Mademoiselle put all our delinquencies down to neglect, and saw to it that we made up for lost time. In order to familiarize us with all the conjunctions at once, and enlist our interest as well, she would give us verbs like this to write out:

"Aller à Paris, recevoir vingt mille francs, remettre l'argent à son banquier, choisir une robe de bal. (Détails à discrétion.)"

When we had exhausted our imaginations on the "détails" (my ball-dress was always to be of Malines lace, with white lilac and pearls like Princess Massimo's), she would lead us to more prosaic subjects, and we had to flounder through a schedule of household duties which included those nightmare verbs *moudre*, *croustiller*, *bouillir*, etc. By the time we had reached the cruel "imparfait du subjonctif" we were black in the face, and Mademoiselle indulgently explained that the ear-splitting "Que je bouillisse, que vous moulussiez, que nous

croustillassions," were never to be employed unless absolutely necessary, and that French people themselves were very proud when they did not go wrong in them. I found an amusing proof of this a few years ago in Balzac's "Lettres à l'Étrangère." I think it is in the middle of one of those matchless canticles of passion that he falls two or three times into the forbidden tense, and then, like the dear big child he was, he exclaims delightedly, "Voyez-vous comme je me joue de l'imparfait du subjonctif?"

In spite of Mademoiselle's prejudices quite a German influence came into my life at Seelisberg, with a family of whom we saw much in after-years. It consisted of Princess Solms-Braunfels, her daughter Elizabeth, and four sons, George, Albrecht, Fritz, and Hermann. They were mediatized Sovereigns, like so many others whose small domains had been absorbed in the nationalization of Germany, floating round Europe with great names, sore hearts, plenty of money, and nothing to do. After I was grown up (or thought myself so), they used to come to Rome for the winter and install themselves in a beautiful villa near the Porta Pinciana, and we passed many happy evenings with them there. The old lady was nearly blind, and the salon had to be kept dimly lighted to spare her eyes. Her daughter hardly left her side; she was a saint of a girl, only living to devote herself to her mother. They were devout Catholics (the boys were all Protestants as their father had been), and in my dear mother they recognized a kindred soul, though she was not a Catholic in name. We used to leave the three talking of heavenly things by the green-shaded lamp, and go off into another room to play, I am afraid very childish games, generally ending up with an im-

promptu dance, for which Princess Elizabeth came out and played as long as we liked.

My great friend was George, the eldest son, who, in the intervals of trying to convert me to spiritualism, used to play the wildest practical jokes, delighting in jarring the sense of importance and dignity which had come to me with my first long frocks. I was full of sentimentality and affectations, and I had persuaded my mother to let me have what I had dreamed of for years, a black velvet with an enormously long train—girls sometimes wore black velvet in those days—and Prince George went off into convulsions of laughter when he beheld me thus attired. Henceforth he never called me anything but "Die kleine Wittwe," and most wickedly resolved to take the nonsense out of me. They were all at our house one evening, with a crowd of other young people, and George disappeared for a few minutes and then returned holding two saucers in his hand. We had been turning tables, I think, and he asked me if I would let him magnetize me. No one had ever succeeded in doing that—my temperament is so hopelessly positive that experts have tried their wiles on it in vain—but I said he was welcome to try. So he sat down opposite me, the rest of the world looking on, and told me to fix my eyes on his face and copy his movements. He handed me one saucer and, retaining the other, rubbed his finger on the underside and then rubbed his face, across and across in every direction. I did as I was told, and every time I touched my face the wildest peals of laughter went up from the audience. At last I got frightened and rushed to a mirror. My face was as black as my velvet gown. The villain had smoked *my* saucer over a lamp! It took me a long time to forgive

him, but the lesson was a salutary one, and, for some time, I consented to appear what I was—very little more than a schoolgirl still.

Prince George's character would have been interesting to a student of heredity. His mother's devout religiousness had been turned aside from its legitimate object by his Protestant education, but it was all in him, faith and aspirations, and a constant reaching out to the exalted and the mystic. When I was seeing so much of him he thought he had found what he wanted in spiritualism, but he put it there himself. His spiritualism had nothing to do with the gross materialistic developments of the so-called science in these later years: it was all ethereal, pure and gentle; he believed himself surrounded by beneficent spirits fresh from Heaven, and he tried to be worthy of their society. After my marriage, when we had drifted apart, he married a Princess Moliterna of Naples, and became, as I was told—doubtless in answer to his mother's and his sister's lifelong prayers—a devout Catholic. Princess Elizabeth never married; she came back to Rome from time to time after her mother's death, and each time, as my mother told me, seemed nearer Heaven—one of those who are only permitted to stay here in order that we may not believe our naughty, stupid, selfish world altogether abandoned by the angels.

After the summer at Seelisberg Jennie and I did not see our own people for two long years. The Civil War had half ruined everybody, and long journeys for us were out of the question. The decision was a great blow to our hopes, but the Aunts and our school friends planned a summer of visits for us which took much of the edge off the privation. With Eleanor Sewell in charge we went up into the Shires, and I found myself for the first

time among people whose one palpitating interest in life was hunting. Mattie Chaplin, and a cousin of hers, Mousie Sherbrooke (afterwards Lady Sempill), were always talking about it; and when we went to stay with the Sherbrookes at Oxton—close to Robin Hood's own Sherwood Forest—I began to understand why, and I also fell under the charm of the English country life about which so much is written, but which must be seen and shared to be appreciated. Robin Hood's country was Lincolnshire—still full of legends about him—but from there we went into Nottinghamshire to stay at Annesley, the Chaworth Musters' place, whose master was the M.F.H., and a very great personage in local estimation. It was a beautiful old house, standing in lovely grounds, but the family seemed to think nothing of either in comparison with the stables and the kennels. These last were most attractive to me. I have never seen more beautiful creatures than those hounds, with their long, intelligent faces and human eyes. I was standing with the Master one day close to the wicket of their enclosure, and as he called each one by name and it came up, all joy and friendliness, to greet him, I suddenly opened the gate and stepped inside to have a closer look at them. There was one long growl—a rush—and then I had been lifted bodily back and set on my feet outside, and the irate Master just stopped short of shaking me. "Do you want to be killed?" he snorted. "Don't ever dare to do such a thing again!"

Of course the house was full of relics and memorials of beautiful Mary Chaworth, Byron's first love. Her miniature showed a sweet, rosy face, surrounded with short golden curls, after the fashion of her day, and big, laughing blue eyes which gave no indications of a broken

heart. She must have been very lovely—and very good, for she truly loved the boy (younger by some years than herself), but refused to break her given word. So she married the wrong man and remained faithful to him, and he in return made her very unhappy. Byron married the wrong woman—but then, would there ever have been really a right one for that wayward character? One hardly dared to pronounce his name at Annesley, although the place seemed still to echo with his footsteps. Resentments live long in those big, lonely country houses, and the memory of the tragically famous duel, which took place in a generation antecedent to Byron's, was still so hot in the minds of Mary Chaworth's descendants that I did not wonder at the poet's confession that he was "afraid of the family portraits of the Chaworths; that he fancied they owed him a grudge on account of the duel, and would come down at night from their frames to haunt him!"

It was Byron's great-uncle who was the hero of that crime. He and his friend Mr. Chaworth and some other Nottinghamshire squires were in the habit, when they were in London, of dining together once a week at one of the fashionable coffee-houses. Some discussion arose as to who had the best coverts of pheasants on his estate, and Lord Byron and Mr. Chaworth, having drunk deeply like every one else, lost their tempers. At once a duel was arranged—but what a duel! Without witnesses, in a pitch-dark room, before any signal had been given, Lord Byron came close to his friend and ran him through the body. His victim lived long enough to describe the attack, which certainly constituted murder. No wonder that "Byron" was an unpopular name at Annesley! Any admiration I ventured to express for the

poet was sternly put down, and every occasion taken to convince me that, being a Byron, he was in consequence not only a monster of immorality and cruelty, but a coward as well, an aspersion which surely none but a Chaworth would venture to cast on his rather lurid memory.

We spent a day at Newstead Abbey, "repentant Henry's pride," as Byron calls it, where, amid much decay, the two rooms he chiefly occupied had then undergone no change. I held in my hand the skull which his sadly theatrical tendencies made him choose for a drinking cup; I read the verses written thereon in his fine delicate hand-writing; and, having a pretty familiar acquaintance with skulls from my childhood's visits to catacombs and museums, was not so shocked at the whim as my hosts intended me to be. I was shown too the place on the floor where the page had to sleep to keep his master company in the haunted room, and the grave of the faithful Newfoundland in the garden. Somehow the epitaph on "Boatswain's" monument impressed me more than anything else—it was so warm and heartfelt; and the charge of "cowardice," at least, was refuted by the self-forgetting tenderness with which Byron had nursed his dying dog through all the horrors of hydrophobia. Besides, I knew that the man had great and generous sides to his character. Doctor Howe, who married my Aunt Julia, had been his friend and comrade in Greece, was with him when he died, and always spoke of him with passionate admiration. "There was never another like him," was always the closing word, and though forty years had passed since that day at Missolonghi, the mention of Byron's name still brought tears to his eyes.

From Annesley we went on into Warwickshire, to a

less old but much more "ghostly" house. Jennie and I were put into two rooms where everything had been standing just as it was since the time of powder and hoops. The dressing-table was a museum, with scores of little drawers and hiding-places still redolent of cosmetics and love-letters. The quaintly shaped comfit and powder boxes used to arrange themselves, it seemed to us, in patterns of their own, without our help; there was the portrait of a pretty lady who, we were sure, came once or twice and looked over our shoulders as we stood before the glass; there was also the portrait of a man, with such dark "following" eyes that we had to turn the canvas to the wall—it got on our nerves so painfully. Soft footsteps certainly used to move around us at night, and, more than once, an unseen hand lifted the *portières* as we entered the room.

I always had the impression that this was the house where a grim discovery was made a little later. For once Aunt Elizabeth must have forgotten our presence, for I heard her recount to Aunt Ellen the story, of which she had just received the details in a letter. It made a tale rather too significant for schoolgirl ears. Her friends, the owners of a certain old house, she said, had been in possession of it some time, having inherited it from another branch of the family, when they decided to clear away the crowding shrubbery, which almost covered one side. The laurels had grown so big and dense that they were beginning to shadow the first-floor windows, and kept things much too dark and stuffy. So the laurels were cut away, and then it became evident that a part of the building ran out farther into them than any one had noticed. Measurements were taken, and proved that a room existed to which there was no entrance from

within. This was finally effected by breaking down a bricked-up window, and then the long-excluded daylight showed a bedroom—of the eighteenth century—in wild confusion, garments thrown on the floor, and chairs overturned as if in a struggle. On the mouldering bed lay the skeleton of a woman still tricked out in satin and lace, with a dagger sticking between the ribs. Under the bed was another skeleton, that of a man, who seemed from the twisted limbs and unnatural position to have died hard.

No clue had been obtained to the story. It was just one of those domestic tragedies which, as my brother used to say, might occur any day in one of those remote country houses where the master's word is law and no outsider can ever penetrate.

It was rather a relief to us to leave the eerie Warwickshire house, kind and charming as our hosts were, for a dwelling of quite another kind, New College, Oxford, of which the Aunts' brother was at that time Warden. Dr. Sewell's splendid old rooms appealed to me more than anything I had yet seen in England. The space, the well-planned lines, the deep windows and carved ceilings, were a perfect joy, and the life led there was so in harmony with it all. I found myself in an atmosphere of courtliness and learning, opulence, dignity, old port and old traditions, all apparently integral parts of the whole. I felt no special admiration for William of Wykeham; I knew too little about him; but his motto, "Manners makyth man," was dramatically appropriate to all I saw. It was on everything at New College, from the jugs and basins in the bedrooms to the china on the table and the lintels of the doors. It was frankly pagan—no nonsense about doing right and living for

the love of God and one's neighbour—just the motto for the decorous education which reigned in those stately halls. At first I was afraid that I might fall short of it, and had a horrible attack of shyness when I found myself seated at dinner opposite Dr. Sewell, before whom, as I understood, some hundreds of undergraduates were accustomed to tremble in their shoes. But he was very gracious and kind, and soon it became a pleasure to study his high-bred face, with its lines of judicial thought and impeccable self-control, and to listen to his pure, pointed English as he discussed subjects a thousand miles above my head, with a guest, another light of the University, whose name I forget.

In the few days we spent there I saw enough to give me an ineffaceable memory of Oxford. Miss Sewell had taught us our English history so thoroughly that I was well prepared for the experience, but the beauty of it all took me by surprise. Under the tempered English skies the florid Gothic architecture did not give me the sense of unrest which it always does abroad, the result, I suppose, of my early training in Bramante and Giulio Romano, and the other builders of their day, whose rich, calm style is the only fitting one where nature supplies so much colour and exuberance for the background. But one beauty England has which Italy has not—level, emerald turf, and nowhere is this more perfect than in those College quadrangles. I was never tired of looking at it, the thing seemed such a miracle. "That's fine!" remarked an American multi-millionaire to an English gardener. "How do you manage to get it?"

"Oh, it's quite simple, sir," was the reply. "You've only got to roll it for three hundred years."

The summer came to an end all too soon, and we

went back into harness in Bonchurch for one year more. My sister, who was now seventeen, was to leave at the end of it; but I, three years younger, pleaded hard to stay on till I should have reached that age. My mother would not consent, and I was honestly sorry. It had taken me a long time to overcome my homesickness and really fall in love with the place and all it meant, but that had come to me at last, and I knew that I was happy there and should be helped to be good. The tastes which have most helped me in life, Miss Elizabeth Sewell had fostered, if she had not implanted them; she had taught me the value of good reading and clear thinking, and in one of the last talks she had with me, she exacted a promise which has kept me from wasting much valuable time—never to read a novel in the morning! I had, I fear, given the good Aunts a great deal of trouble in the beginning, but I came away with a glorious record—not a single bad mark in my register for the final six months!

CHAPTER XV

WAR CLOUDS AND WAR STORIES

Return to Rome—The Tiber "comes out"—Sorrento—"Terrorizing"—Jennie—War clouds in the north—Florence—Three delays—Clara Novello—The "petit Mortara" incident—Fighting near Varese—Erich von Rabe—A grim incident at Königgrätz—Ludwig von Benedek.

AT the end of June 1865 we returned to Rome and found the family established in Palazzo Odescalchi, one of the five palaces which occupy, with the church of SS. Apostoli, the whole Piazza of that name. The meeting with my mother after two years of complete separation was such a happiness that I took but scant notice of the surroundings. My half-brother Arthur was just six months old—a Sunday Christmas child with a character to match; there was the small half-sister, now three, my beloved Annie, and dearest of all our tribe, my brother Marion, and nothing seemed wanting anywhere in my world. We stayed in Rome only a couple of weeks, just long enough for Jennie and me to be fitted out with a wardrobe more in consonance with foreign fashions than Miss Sewell's taste and a village dressmaker's efforts had been able to attain. Bonchurch fashions were prim in the extreme; from my first arrival there I had been condemned to wear a bonnet for church, and bonnets were structures in the early 'sixties. I shall never forget my mother's face when I proudly showed her a "poke" rising several inches from my forehead, the entire front

filled in with white may and ornamented with wide lavender strings which tied under my chin in a huge bow. I never saw the bonnet again, nor did I possess another for many a long year. We still wore small crinolines, the graceful management of which had been a painful part of our training, but they disappeared for good a year later, to my profound relief.

The city was all under water, the Tiber having "come out," as the Romans say, and as quickly as possible we hurried down to Sorrento to escape from the heat and a threatened invasion of the cholera; and we were soon installed in the Cocumella, one of Garibaldi's sequestrated convents, taken over by a devout inhabitant to keep for its exiled owners, who, however, never returned, so that the good Gargiulo and his family run it to this day, with such success that it has become known all over the world as a perfect refuge of peace and "hominess" and comfort.

We occupied the entire first floor, with the great terrace which is now the public one for guests, and from that time dates many a delightful association which continually drew one and another of us back to Sorrento, until my dear brother, long years afterwards, chose it for his home and built his fairy palace on the cliff above the sea, just to the right of the old Cocumella, where he sometimes had to house extra guests when his own domicile would hold no more.

In the early summer of 1865 things had been rather disturbed in the Penisola Sorrentina. Bands of brigands haunted the almost inaccessible peaks and passes which ran its entire length, dividing the northern shore, which looks towards Naples, quite effectually from the southern one, facing Pæstum and Circe's Promontory. An Englishman named Mowens had managed to fall into their

clutches and was being held for ransom, and five big ships of the Mediterranean Squadron were stationed at Sorrento to terrorize the outlaws into giving him up without it. I never could make out how the terrorizing was going to be done. There were no visible signs of it anywhere. There the beautiful shining men-of-war (the term battleship had not been invented) lay week after week, paddling round a little in the warm blue water, enlivening the landscape, providing the delighted Sorrentini with a thousand new things to look at and talk about, while their hospitable commanders gave one charming entertainment after another, so that for us girls at least the summer was one long dream of fun and excitement. Admiral Hornby was in command, and was living on shore with his wife and daughter at the Hotel Tramontano, where they gave a dance which I thought very splendid. I was much too young for such things, but my dear mother was prevailed upon to take me; and I did not feel too young when I got there, for Miss Hornby, aged twelve, took command of the entire proceedings with a calm self-possession which could only come from long experience. She was a quaint little person and had "late hours" written all over her queer tired face. But she looked after everything splendidly, down to pairing us all off for supper, when I found myself assigned to the smallest midshipmite who ever wore a uniform. I think he was twelve, and a head and shoulders shorter than myself, but of a dignity! The cotillon was the first I had ever seen, and I danced so hard that a string of pink Roman pearls I had borrowed from Annie and hung round my neck melted into a solid mass and had to be pulled off by main force when I got home.

It was all very grand and grown up, but I enjoyed much more the luncheons and afternoon dances given for us on board the ships. One of these was the *Royal Sovereign*, a wooden vessel (and I fancy the last of them), and one of the Sherbrookes, Will, was among her officers. He was very shy, and brought several companions to support him through his first call, and from that moment our terrace became a very popular place with the fleet. I think every man who set foot on it fell in love with my sister Jennie, some in sailor fashion —one or two very seriously, and everything that was done for us was done for her sake.

I have said very little about Jennie so far; even at this distance of time it is hard to speak of her without renewing the pang of her loss. She left us just a year later, in all the perfection of her bloom, as somehow I and she had always felt she would. "Whom the gods love die young," but while she lived she radiated life around her and was loved as very few are loved in this world, by all who knew her, old and young, rich and poor, Prince and peasant. She was gifted in every way. Her lovely face, with its dark blue Irish eyes and roseleaf tints, was only the reflection of a soul as gay and pure as the dew at sunrise; her voice, a clear high soprano, was music's own. When it mingled with Annie's rich contralto a whole streetful of people would gather under the windows to listen. Small and beautifully proportioned, she always seemed to move on velvet; she danced as lightly as a snowflake, and just played by nature. Her little white hands made the piano sing or weep as they liked. She was the improvatrice of the family, and at Bonchurch, where she was the queen of the school-room after Mattie Chaplin left, would tell long consecutive



From an oil painting

p. 228] JENNIE CRAWFORD (age 7)

novels, lasting through a whole term, to the breathless ring that gathered round her on rainy afternoons and holidays. She started a school-room weekly newspaper which she kept up for some months, writing almost all of it herself, and she had written one or two complete novels before she died. But her greatest talent was her mimicry. Few professionals that I have seen approached her in this.

During that one winter in Rome I remember many a morning when the mood would seize her after breakfast, as we girls drifted into the red drawing-room, where we were supposed to occupy ourselves reasonably till lunch-time. Then everybody we knew passed in review before us, and particularly all the officers of whom we had been seeing so much at Sorrento. Old or young, shy or arrogant, each with his special oddity caught for all time, with such lightning changes from one to another that we seemed to be listening to a real conversation as we watched—it was kaleidoscopic, and every tone and movement was true. And Jennie was really good; her ideals were immensely high, and she lived consistently up to them, looking upon herself as a most faulty creature who needed severe control. When we left Bonchurch Aunt Elizabeth said to me, "If you are ever in need of advice, go to Jennie, and do as she tells you; you will be perfectly safe." A very great tribute for a woman of her character and experience to pay to a girl of seventeen.

We celebrated Jennie's eighteenth birthday in that November, and then she came out formally, I of course being left behind, and taking the keenest interest in all her little triumphs. The next summer, the great war summer of 1866, we lingered on too late in Rome. It was hard to know where to go, since for some reason my mother or my stepfather did not wish to return

to Sorrento. The North of Italy was all under the war cloud, revolutionary agents had made everything near us unsafe, and we were still undecided when some friends who had a villa at Albano carried Jennie off to stay with them for a fortnight. She caught a feverish cold and was brought home again; nobody recognized the beginnings of typhoid, and ten days afterwards she was dead.

We covered her with her own Provence roses and somebody laid a mass of heliotrope at her feet; and my mother would never have those flowers brought into the house again. It nearly killed us at the time, and, looking back on the "twisted tangle of life," I think the crowning gift of my little sister's gay, innocent existence was its stainless end. We fled to Florence then, a place I have always detested in spite of its unquestionable beauty. Three times I have had to stay there in deepest trouble of soul: once in that summer of bereavement; once four years later, in 1870, when we could not get home because General Bixio was dropping shells into our palace; and once again in 1900, when my son was fighting the Boers; and each time Florence has seemed more utterly alien and antipathetic to my stricken spirit. As Marion always said, "I am far too good a Roman not to hate Florence." But one of my dearest friends is a Florentine, and for her sake I will not make a detailed list of its sins as I see them!

The home tragedy of that summer made us forget a good deal of what was taking place in the North, where Königgrätz, the most important battle of our own period of European history, had been fought and won by the Prussians on the 2nd of July, and the war, so far as they were concerned, was over, though it lasted a few days longer in Italy.

Curiously enough my future brother-in-law, Erich von Rabe, was fighting in the Prussian Army, and Count Mario Gigliucci, who became a kind of adopted brother of ours later, in the Italian, but at the time we had not even heard their names.

Mario's mother was the famous soprano Clara Novello, about whom all England had gone crazy when she sang the great airs of Haydn's oratorios. The Novellos had been long enough in England to almost forget their Italian origin, but Clara Novello was Italian through and through, and met her fate in the person of Count Gigliucci, a fiery nobleman from the Marches, who never permitted her to sing in public afterwards. The public protested indignantly at the privation, and her place was never filled on the oratorio stage, for that is the highest vocation of all and few are granted the specialized gifts needed to exercise it in perfection. For one really great oratorio woman singer we generally count two or three eminent operatic prima-donnas. The oratorio supplies no fictitious aids of scenery, impersonation, or story to bring the audience into sympathy with the singer. It is just music in its purest, baldest form, and the artist who can stand up with five hundred stringed instruments behind her and thousands of calm critical listeners before and sing "Lift thine eyes unto the hills whence cometh thy help," or "Rest in the Lord and He shall give thee thy heart's desire," so as to lift every soul there into the very courts of Heaven, must have, as one would think, learnt her art among the angels before bringing it down to earth. A voice such as is heard perhaps once or twice in a century, a temperament balanced to equal richness and simplicity, a perfect physique handed down through generations untainted by

degeneracy, dissipation, or hysteria—these are the necessary conditions for the greatest singers, and for the oratorio singer one more grace is needed, a living faith in the immortal messages to which her voice must lend its wings.

Clara Novello had it all, but she was something more than a great artist, she was a true good woman : her husband's wishes were law to her ; no one ever heard a word of regret for her lost career and the enormous fortune it would have brought her fall from her lips. But what the public had lost her friends gained. She was always ready to sing for them, and the joy she thus shed around her was incalculable. Into her quite regular existence came no excitement, no strain or fatigue of body or mind, so her voice retained all its power and sweetness till quite late in life. It was divinely young long after she was a grandmother, and she herself was young and fresh in mind and heart when she died, at the age of ninety.

Such women make ideal mothers, and her sons and daughters were delightfully like her, with a strong dash of their father, the most imperious of autocrats at home and a redoubtable liberal abroad. We met them in the early 'seventies, when Florence had invaded Rome, and though we loved not the invaders we took the Gigliuccis to our hearts at once. They were great friends of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh, the American Minister and his wife, who had represented the United States during the few years when Florence served as a temporary capital, and it was in Mrs. Marsh's drawing-room that I and the girls were first thrown together. They adored Mrs. Marsh and I disliked her intensely, but that made no difference. She was a relic of the Florence ring, and

was always dinning the iniquities of Catholicism and the Papacy into one's ears, *à la* Mrs. Browning. She was a distinguished invalid too, and never rose from her couch, up to which we all went in turn to make our curtseys—and fly! She had big, serious black eyes, a frightfully serious coiffure of heavy black plaits, the domesday voice of a Calvinist preacher and the finality of a St. Peter in delivering her judgments. If people will take themselves seriously enough they will end by being funnier than Weedon Grossmith or Teddy Paine, and Mrs. Marsh sent me into the farthest corner of her room one day to hide my abject convulsions of laughter when she had been holding forth on the barbaric cruelty of the Church's action in the case of the little Mortara boy, which had caused so much excitement that witty Edmond About in his book on Italy stated the population at so many millions "sans compter le petit Mortara." He was a Jew baby, the son of poor parents, who at the time of his birth was so weak that he appeared to have but a few hours to live. The midwife, like a good Christian, immediately baptized him, as is the duty of all Catholics lay or ecclesiastic in like circumstances.

As so often happens, the administration of the Sacrament brought new strength to the poor mite, and, contrary to all expectation, it lived. The nurse held her counsel, but kept herself informed of the baby's whereabouts, and when he had reached the age of seven, set by the Church as the period when a child becomes responsible for its actions, she went and laid the case before the ecclesiastical authorities, knowing that a child who had been baptized a Catholic must be brought up as one. I imagine that she got something of a lecture for her hasty action, but the authorities did the only thing they could do, took the

little boy and put him into a good Catholic school, where he received a much better education than he could otherwise have obtained. His Jewish mother was naturally enraged; the act seemed to be one of intolerable arbitrariness; Protestant Europe echoed her lamentations over the gain of a soul to Christianity; Catholic Europe wished to goodness that the tiresome thing had never happened, though, having happened, it could have no other outcome in a country where the Church had authority. And the Church, to whom popularity has not the weight of a feather in the balance with right and wrong and the salvation of one human soul, took no notice of either, and saw to it that, since the Mortara boy had fortuitously been made a Christian, he should have all the advantages of the merciful accident here and hereafter.

Mrs. Marsh, as I say, was eloquent in outcry, and had been talking about the abomination of a religion that "tore little children from their mothers," and my relief was great when I chanced upon Porzia and Valeria Gigliucci, healthily indifferent to cant of every kind. We fused at once, and from that time we saw them and their brother Mario almost every day. He was suffering from Benjaminitis on the part of his adoring parents, who would not hear of his leaving home to carve out a career, as he was longing to do. Being only the younger son of a man with more land than money, he saw very little in his own future unless he could strike out for himself. Meanwhile he was a delightful companion, so young still that it seemed hard to believe that four or five years earlier he had been carrying a rifle and following Garibaldi in harrying the Austrians out of Italy, while the Prussians were winning battles over them in Bohemia. Garibaldi's operations were confined to the mountains north of the

Italian lakes, and Mario told us of the extreme bitterness of the fighting on the Italian side. All the long hatred which had been cheated of satisfaction by the unpopular peace of Villafranca found expression in 1866. Even the clergy took up arms in the national cause. Mario told us that in the struggle of the Garibaldians with the Austrians near Varese he and other sharpshooters were engaged in picking off the enemy's officers, and that, of all engaged in this task, the most expert was a parish priest, to whom the others quickly passed their rifles after each of his deadly shots. One of them, typical of the rest, was directed against an officer on a grey horse. As the priest took aim he continued the running fire of comments on his own marksmanship with which he had been accompanying it for some time. "That's a Major on the grey horse! Pom!" pressing the trigger and peering through the smoke to note the effect of the shot, "Ah!—*he'll* never get up again!"

Nor did the Austrians trouble Italy any longer after that, and at some future day, when their rule there is forgotten, we may bow politely to them across the Alps—but no nearer, please!

While Mario Gigliucci, rifle in hand, was racing up and down the steep passes, keeping step with the gallant little Bersaglieri, Erich von Rabe, an officer in the Fusiliers of the Prussian Guard, was serving in the Army of the Elbe under the Crown Prince, "Unser Fritz," as the soldiers called him. When I knew him long afterwards I wished I had been one of them, for he was a man whom one would have been proud to serve, even in the most obscure capacity. To look at he was a hero of German legend—big, fair, blue-eyed, noble-looking, with the kindest of smiles under his short golden beard and

the ring of a great true heart in his voice. With Royalty's usual clairvoyance he knew who I was directly, and had many kind things to say about Erich von Rabe and his younger brother, Oscar (now General in Command of the garrison of Graudentz).

"Ah, the Rabes!" exclaimed the Prince. "Why, I have known them all my life. Splendid fellows, both of them! Such good soldiers and true comrades! Erich was with me at Königgrätz." And he went on to tell me how much he regretted the loss of Erich, who had been so severely wounded at Gravelotte that he could never mount a horse again and was obliged to retire from the service he so dearly loved.

Poor Erich had a very grim experience at Königgrätz, one of which he always spoke with something like a shudder. The First Army, under the Crown Prince, had begun its march at two in the morning in a pouring rain. The early part of that summer had been the wettest on record in Bohemia; and the rain was still falling, as it had been doing for days on end, when at three o'clock in the afternoon the Prussian Guards reached the scene of conflict, stormed the villages of Problus and Lipa, and joined hands with their comrades of the King's (the Second) Army over the ridge of hills that separated them. Not until towards evening, when Benedek had been forced to retire and had fallen back all along the line towards Königgrätz, did the depressing downpour cease. After the fighting was over, the confusion in the Prussian Army was very considerable, some three hundred thousand men being crowded together in an area of about one square mile, regiment inextricably mixed with regiment, so that it was midnight before they were disentangled and got into order.

By that time everybody was starving; not one of the officers, from "Father" Moltke to the junior regimental "porte-épée" Fähnrich, had thought of providing himself with anything for supper. Moltke himself, as he ruefully relates, had to ride back through the darkness twenty miles to the staff headquarters at Gitschin, and could only succeed in obtaining a small piece of "Leberwurst" (liver sausage) from an Uhlan, which he devoured thankfully before throwing himself on his bed, fully dressed, to recover a little from the great fatigue of the previous night and day. Erich von Rabe, with three of his brother-officers, had of course remained on the field; they were lucky enough to find a few biscuits, and Erich's servant, Ludwig, was ordered to find water and make some coffee for the party. Ludwig was gone some time, but finally returned with the steaming coffee, excusing himself for the delay on the grounds of pitchy darkness and ignorance of the locality. The coffee was drunk with many expressions of grateful approval. "The best we ever tasted!" was the unanimous verdict, Erich remarking that it was slightly salt, but that he had never been so thankful for any drink in his life.

With dawn, the four comrades, who had been dreaming of more coffee all night, sat up and told Ludwig to repeat his achievement; and the good fellow ran off to obey. To Erich's astonishment, however, he returned almost immediately, as white as a sheet, the still empty coffee-pot almost dropping from his trembling hand.

"What's the matter with you?" his master demanded angrily. "You look as if you had seen a ghost!"

"Herr Lieutenant—forgive!" stammered the horrified man; "but—but—the truth is—the ditch from which I took the water for the coffee that the gnädigen Herren

so kindly approved of last night—ah, there's no real water in it at all! It's full of nothing but dead Austrians!" The coffee had been made with blood.

Ludwig was one of Erich's own peasants, born and bred on the estate; and when I went to stay with my sister at Lesnian, twenty years after Königgrätz, he was still serving the family in the capacity of coachman. He was a servant of the old sort, for whom the "Herrschaft's" lightest wish was a dogma to be revered; but his funny old blue eyes still looked frightened, and no power on earth would ever make his stiff grey hair lie down on his head. The incident had made a deep impression on his queer, dogged nature, and, I fancy, often came back to him on winter nights, when the snow lay deep on the ground, and the wind was sweeping down from Russia to howl through the ten-mile tract of black pine forest which surrounded my sister's lonely home. The echoes of far earlier conflicts sounded there; many sad stories were still repeated among the "Leute," and the plough still turned up from time to time gruesome relics of the poor Frenchmen who had been murdered by the peasants when company after company of Napoleon's Grand Army passed this way in the retreat from Moscow.

As for the great battle of Königgrätz (or, more properly, Sadowa), it has so often been represented that the success of the Prussians was due to the adventitiously timely arrival of the Crown Prince and his Army on the field, that it may not be amiss to give a short statement of the actual facts. There was no more element of chance in the victory of Sadowa than in that other "meisterstrich" of Moltke's, four years later, at Sedan—both were the results of steadfast, determined

preparation. If Bismarck, as he admits, felt nervous about the outcome of Sadowa, it was only because of his insufficient acquaintance at that time with the character and methods of his greatest colleague in King William's service.

Moltke always protested indignantly against the notion that his victory over Benedek was the fruit of anything but the due carrying out of a carefully preconceived plan of campaign. He used to say that, in his opinion, the highest point of strategy attainable by any general was the bringing together on the battle-field of two armies from divergent points against the enemy's one—exactly what he succeeded in doing in Bohemia on that rainy July day of 1866, the taking of one's adversary between two fires—"in der taktischen Mitte," as he puts it.

He himself, from the beginning of the operations until his departure with the King from Berlin on June 30, directed the movements of the Prussian commanders in the field—Prince Frederick Charles, the Crown Prince, and General Herewarth von Bittenfeld—by telegrams. Prince Frederick Charles and Bittenfeld had effected their union at Gitschin in Bohemia on June 27, and now formed what was known as the Second Army; whilst the First Army, that of the Crown Prince, was coming down to meet them through Silesia and the Riesengebirge; he reached Königinhof, a spot some thirty miles from Gitschin, on June 30.

Meanwhile the Austrians and their allies, the Saxons, being pressed in ever more closely by the converging Prussians, were falling back towards the centre of Bohemia, where they might find a favourable ground for a defensive battle on a large scale. They fixed on a stretch of land

between the Elbe and two smaller streams, the Bistritz and the Trottina, occupying both sides of the highway between Gitschin and Königgrätz, and some distance in the rear of the latter fortress. Thus Benedek had the Bistritz on his front and the Trottina covering his right flank, with the fortress of Königgrätz and the Elbe in his rear—a very strong position.

On July the 2nd the Prussian leaders were still in doubt as to whether Benedek had thrown his whole strength to the farther side of the Elbe or not; they surmised that he intended to place the wider river between them and himself, and take up a position under the very walls of Königgrätz. In order to determine exactly the extent of his retreat, a reconnaissance was ordered to be made, in the direction of Josefstadt, by cavalry of Prince Frederick Charles's Army. The latter's quarters were at Höritz, some ten miles nearer the centre of the Austrian outposts than was Gitschin, where the field offices of the King's headquarters had been established.

About midnight of July the 2nd, Moltke was waked out of his sleep at Gitschin by an adjutant of Prince Frederick Charles, with the all-important news that the greater part of Benedek's Army was still on the near side of the Elbe, between the Elbe and the Bistritz, with a front centre on the last-named stream at the village of Sadowa.

Moltke instantly perceived that an immediate attack must be made with the whole force at his disposal, before the Austrians should have time to cross the Elbe. Without losing a moment he conducted the mud-stained adjutant to the King, who was sleeping at the Burgomaster's house, to obtain his sanction for the proposed

general attack in the morning. The King, satisfied of the urgency of the case, accorded his assent; and the adjutant rode back to Prince Frederick Charles with orders to that effect. A second messenger was despatched to where the Crown Prince lay, at Königinhof, with a pressing summons to advance to the assistance of the King's Army and fall on the Austrian right flank from the north-east. The plucky messenger, who made his way as by a miracle forth and back through the swarming patrols of the enemy, returned to Gitschin at four in the morning with "Unser Fritz's" promise that he would not fail to do what was required of him. The battle was ordered for seven o'clock, by which hour it was supposed that he would have had time to cover the intervening distance.

It must be explained that Benedek, the centre of whose line, as has been seen, was at Sadowa, had drawn up his Army on a line of hills that fell in natural terraces down to the wide marshy tracts bordering the river, which could only be crossed at Sadowa itself and at Nechanitz; these hills were topped by the village of Lipa, and that of Chlum, with its dense woods and pretty little church, the very pews of which were afterwards found covered with the marks of bloody fingers, where the wounded had gripped them in their sufferings. On the right flank, protected by the Trottina, was a second range of hills falling to the water's edge, and called after the villages of Prim and Problus—hills crowned by no more than two trees, which served as a landmark and objective for the Crown Prince's attack.

Morning broke rainy and grey, "regnerischer, trübseliger Morgen," to use Moltke's own words, and very early he attended on the King, accompanied by his Majesty's

adjutant, Alvensleben. From Gitschin the Royal staff set out in carriages to where their horses were awaiting them at Höritz, in pouring rain. Here the old King, prudent man, put on his goloshes, and a groom buckled his spurs over them. A few perfunctory salutes and greetings were exchanged between the newcomers and those already on the ground, and then King William led the whole group of officers a little way farther to where a better view of the day's proceedings could be obtained. He turned once to Moltke, who rode a yard or two behind him, and asked his opinion of the probable outcome of the impending encounter, and it was then that he received the famous answer, given in tones of quiet confidence, " Euro Majestät wird heute nicht nur die Schlacht, sondern auch den Feldzug gewinnen." (Your Majesty will to-day win not only the battle but the campaign.) After which the King turned away in satisfied silence and applied himself to studying the distant, rain-dimmed hills and the long lines of blue-coated infantry moving forward under General von Stubnopl to the attack on the Austrian outposts at Mokrowens, Dohalicz, and Dohalicka.

Presently Moltke, deciding that his presence was not immediately necessary, and full of eager interest in the movements of the troops, drew aside and made a sign to Alvensleben to follow him. The two rode quietly away for some little distance towards the enemy's positions, keeping well on the flank of Stubnopl's advance. Their road lay through the heart of some fir plantations over which the first Austrian shells were bursting. Moltke's object apparently was to see for himself the range and bursting capacity of these; it is said that the only incidents of the ride that remained long engraved on his memory were the sight of a lonely ox grazing placidly

by the roadside, undisturbed by the increasing roar in the air, and that of a solitary peasant driving his team to work as usual, as though nothing extraordinary were taking place around him. In answer to the natural question as to whether he were well advised in doing so, he replied, with a shrug of the shoulders, "Well, what difference does it all make to the likes of me? One must work to live."

Soon the two retraced their steps and rejoined the Headquarters Staff, now augmented by the arrival of Count Bismarck on his big sorrel horse. For him, perhaps more than for any one there present, the fate of the day must be his own, and before its close he was destined to undergo moral tension more severe even than that sustained by the King, for whom defeat might well have meant abdication; more than once before the first spattering rifle fire between Problus and Rosberitz announced the arrival of the Crown Prince that afternoon, the man of "blood and iron" was to think desperately of asking his Sovereign's permission to lay aside his civil character of Minister for his old military one of a major of Cuirassiers, so that he might find at least an honourable death on the field.

By this time the action had become general all along the line of the Austrian front; some eleven hundred guns were indulging in an artillery duel that made it difficult for one man to make himself heard by his neighbour without shouting. The Prussian advance was pushed on successfully until Benedek's outposts, including even Sadowa itself, had fallen into their hands, giving them possession of one of the passages over the Bistritz. Thus far they had been enabled to penetrate the enemy's position, thanks to the slowness of his infantry fire, since the

Austrians were armed only with the old-fashioned muzzle-loading weapons to which, despite what they had seen of the results effected by the Prussian "Zündnadelgewehr" during the Danish war, two years earlier, they still adhered. Nevertheless their fire was terrific: so much so indeed that, before long, their adversaries' advance became slower and slower, ceasing at last altogether. By mid-day it was all that the Prussians could do to maintain themselves in their hard-won positions along the river-line of the Bistritz, although, owing to Benedek's resolution to adhere strictly to the defensive, they were not, with the exception of a single commander, in any danger of being compelled to retreat. This exception was that of General von Fransecky—"Fransecky vor!" as he became popularly known to the soldiers later, in 1870, for his fiery courage against the French, upon whom, on one occasion, he led his hard-pressed men with a shout of "Vor!" the colours which he had snatched from an ensign in one hand and his sword in the other. But it was during all the forenoon of Königgrätz that "Father Fransecky" first won the hearts of his men by his obstinate defence of the wood of Maslowed, from which he had driven the Austrians and which he continued to hold throughout the day until the arrival of the Second Army, when he was at last able to advance with the rest of Prince Frederick Charles's command.

As time wore on and no changes showed in the position, a certain uneasiness began to make itself felt among the members of King William's Staff; there was no sign as yet of the Crown Prince, and by one o'clock some trifling disorder was beginning to show, away down on the Prussian front, where in one or two places the

infantry was giving way under the terrible, sustained punishment of the Austrian batteries.

This staggering and restlessness of the infantry was noticeable to the Royal Staff, who began to exchange looks of questioning behind the backs of the three "responsibles," the King, Moltke, and Roon; it was at this moment that the well-known incident so often told in later years by Bismarck took place.

The situation began to look critical, and he could not help taking into account the possibility of a defeat—a thought that was becoming increasingly terrible to him as the minutes succeeded one another and nothing could be seen of the Crown Prince, upon whose timely appearance on the field the fate of Prussia and of all the foremost characters depended. Again and again did Bismarck cast furtive eyes towards where the Chief of the General Staff sat motionless on his horse surveying the battle-field imperturbably through his glasses. At length the Minister could stand the uncertainty no longer and determined to test his colleague's frame of mind for his own satisfaction. What did Moltke think of the state of things? that was the question that was tormenting the other. Riding up to him, he asked the soldier whether he might offer him a cigar, since he saw that he was not smoking; to which Moltke replied that he would be glad of one if Bismarck had one to spare. Upon this the latter produced his case containing only two cigars, the one a Havana of excellent quality, the other of a somewhat inferior brand. Moltke looked them over and even handled them carefully to ascertain their respective merits, and then, with great deliberation, took the Havana, remarking as he lighted and drew slowly at it, "Ausgezeichnet!" (First-rate!) At once Bismarck

was reassured, arguing that things could not be far amiss if Moltke could give so much care to the choice of a cigar; a conclusion that was justified a little later, at about twenty minutes past two, when a cloud of smoke was seen to rise into the air and hang there some seconds, until its volume was increased by a second and a third over the two solitary trees on the hilltop by Problus on the farther side of Benedek's position, where no part of the King's Army could possibly be. Any lingering doubts as to what was taking place were dispelled by a sight of a fresh disturbance and unrest among the Austrian troops, of whom a portion was being moved from side to side of Benedek's position to repel some new enemy on his right flank—the Crown Prince had kept his promise, and, after a march of eleven hours through the almost impassable mud, had arrived in time to deal a mortal blow.

His Army, including the Prussian Guards, among them Erich von Rabe's regiment the Fusilier Battalion, now proceeded to storm the villages of Problus, Prim, and Rosberitz, house by house, a task which cost them dear in men and officers, including Prince Henry XII. of Reuss-Schleiz-Köstritz, a captain of Foot Guards, who, mortally wounded in the attack on Rosberitz, died on the 15th of August. His brother, Henry VII., became a great friend of mine a few years later in Vienna. The Austrians lost, also from wounds received at Königgrätz, Prince Ludwig Karl of Hohenlohe, at that time a Colonel on the Reserve.

Benedek had sent Count Clam Gallas, with a large force of cavalry, to intercept the Crown Prince's advance. But Clam Gallas, angry at having a commoner put over him, scarcely attempted to carry out the order. Benedek

had at first received the news of the Crown Prince's attack and of the piercing of his own flank almost incredulously; but he soon had no choice but to recognize the fact and to withdraw some of his forces from his front to hold it in check; and here there appears to have occurred some inexplicable misunderstanding on the part of one of his subordinates, "der schöne Gablentz," as the good-looking and good-natured Field Marshal Lieutenant, the Freiherr von Gablentz, was popularly known. Gablentz had defended himself successfully until then in the post assigned to him, on the south-west front of Feldzugmeister Benedek's position. Now, suddenly, he seems to have received the impression that his orders from the latter—consequent, naturally, upon the transverse movement of a part of Benedek's reserves from his front in order to defend his flank—were to retire upon the weakened front centre to reinforce it; whereas the Commander-in-Chief's intention was only that Gablentz should retreat sufficiently to get into firmer touch with his brother-commanders on either hand, in the now tightened line of the general defence. So that Gablentz, instead of continuing to hold the village of Chlum—an almost impregnable natural fortress, with its mask of dense woods—fell back towards the rear of Lipa, whence Benedek was directing the battle, leaving Chlum undefended but for the small containing force that he considered sufficient to hold it against the Prussians, who had remained motionless before it for some hours.

No sooner, however, did their leader, General Hiller von Gärtringen, grasp the fact of Gablentz's retreat from the slackening of the fire, than he saw his chance and took it. Throwing himself upon the woods, he

pushed out the enemy from there; and, after frightful losses, succeeded in establishing himself in the village above them—an Austrian Division to right and to left of him. The extent of his casualties incurred in storming the place may be judged from the case of one particular regiment alone, that went into the woods with a strength of three thousand men and ninety officers, and emerged from them eventually with no more than a hundred and eighty men and two officers unwounded.

Hiller's action was decisive; he found himself in the middle of the Austrian line, and turned the artillery captured from the detachment left behind by Gablentz upon his disconcerted opponents on either hand; again and again, despite the desperate efforts to oust him from his point of vantage, he threw back their attacks upon him, until he was killed, and a subordinate took over the command in the same spirit of relentless determination to hold the village to the end at all costs.

But with the success of the Crown Prince's attack on their flank and rear, the Austrians began to crumble up; it was all they could do, as it was, to keep open their lines of retreat upon the Elbe and Königgrätz: hemmed in more and more tightly between the two Prussian bodies, they broke at last into flight to the eastward, just as the rain stopped and a glorious sunset dyed the sky in rear of King William's Staff, who now rode down into the battle-field across the Bistritz to meet the Crown Prince. By then the old King had recovered from the ill-humour which had beset him until his son's arrival. It was with the younger regimental officers that he had been displeased. "They have forgotten everything we ever taught them!" had been his irascible comment upon some unusually marked departure from the strict

parade discipline of Potsdam and Berlin. Only when, before the last attack, the officers had pressed about him in passing, to kiss his hand and even his coat-sleeve, had he had difficulty in hiding his own emotion. "I never knew," he wrote afterwards, "what it was to be loved, till then."

As the General Staff rode on to mix with that of the Crown Prince, congratulations were exchanged by the chiefs; of these Frederick William's principal adviser was that same careful Blumenthal by whose side he defeated MacMahon so decisively, four years later, at Wörth. One can only imagine the heartfelt gladness of all as they watched the Austrian retreat towards where the smoke from a score of distant trains showed that the enemy was already being carried rapidly away over the Elbe and towards Moravia.

When it was all over, the King returned to spend the night at Höritz; but poor Moltke was obliged to ride all the way back to Gitschin, where the Headquarter offices were still established—twenty miles through the night, past endless columns of ammunition waggons, with his Staff. No one in the excitement of the morning had thought of providing himself beforehand with anything to eat for supper; and at Gitschin it was all they could do to get a cup of tea. At last the great soldier threw himself in his clothes upon his bed, feverish with fatigue, to get what sleep he could before the early hour next morning when it would be necessary for him to set out once more from Gitschin to Höritz, in order to obtain the King's ratification of the altered movements called into question by the victory.

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And yet, notwithstanding his defeat and ruin, it may

well be held that the day saw no more sublime hero than Ludwig von Benedek. A glimpse of this very perfect gentleman and faithful servant of his Emperor may not be uninteresting, viewed in the light of the criticisms to which he was subsequently subjected by the press of his own country.

Benedek, on being sent for by the Emperor to take command of the united Austrian and Saxon forces in Bohemia, at first begged to be excused from so arduous a task, urging his own unfitness for coping with the Prussian leaders. "I am nothing but a corps commander," he asserted. "Your Majesty has need of a more highly educated man to handle large bodies of troops in the field. I learned what I know in Italy, and would beg your Majesty to let me serve him there, in a country with which I am acquainted, rather than in Bohemia, of which I am ignorant." He implored the Emperor to entrust the Northern Army to the Archduke Albrecht, who had been sent instead into Italy against the Sardinians. But the Emperor insisted, and Benedek had to give in. At the same time there passed between them some correspondence which, had it been produced later on, at the inquiry into Benedek's leadership, would have effectually absolved him from any charge of cognizant incompetence, but which might have placed his revered Sovereign in an unbeseeming position in the matter. Be that as it may, although such papers were known to exist, not a trace of them could his wife or his friends discover: he had destroyed them, preferring to take the entire blame for what he believed from the first to be inevitable, upon his own shoulders, rather than betray his Sovereign's confidence.

So Benedek was sentenced to be dismissed from the

Army and to other penalties, which latter the Emperor remitted at once.

Benedek, now in his sixty-third year, went to live in retirement at Grätz in Styria; it was typical of the man that, during the months he had to wait in Vienna while the inquiry was in process, he wrote to his adored wife, who had been complaining bitterly of the treatment meted out to him, that, unless she could restrain her criticisms of the Emperor's attitude in the matter, he would have to go away from her and spend the rest of his days apart.

Towards the end of 1880 he went to Vienna to consult a specialist as to certain pains from which he had been suffering for some time in his throat; after examining the trouble, the doctor, on being asked for a diagnosis, tried to approach the fact of what he had to say by some small equivocation, when Benedek, seeing through the manœuvre, turned on him.

"I command you to tell me the truth!" he ordered in the voice of other days, long past. "What is the matter with me?"

And the other told him—cancer; adding that nothing could be done to cure it at that stage.

"And how will it kill me?" asked Benedek.

"By starvation or suffocation," was the answer.

Benedek went back to Grätz, but said nothing to his wife so long as it could be avoided; only when the truth could no longer be hidden did he break it to her. The only sign he ever showed of resentment for the injustice of 1866 was that he gave express orders that he was not to be buried in the uniform which he had then laid aside, but in civilian clothes. With him died his jealously guarded secret on April 27, 1881.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MEXICAN TRAGEDY AND THE MEXICAN WAR

Italy's share in '66—Custozza—The "conquest" of Venetia—Austria's internal troubles—Lissa—The Mexican tragedy—Miramar—Napoleon III.'s cynicism—Meeting between the Empress Carlotta and the Emperor and Empress of the French—Final insanity of Carlotta—King Leopold in Vienna—The family vault of the Hapsburgs—The coffin of Maximilian—Gozzadina Gozzadini and Lily Conrad—Dresden—Saxony in '68—Visit of Frederick William and Bismarck—The Danish grandmother and the invading Prussians—Von Moltke and Bismarck—"Very appropriate"—General Wrangel—A pretty compliment.

ITALY'S share in the successes of 1866 was what I should like to call a psychological one. She reaped fruits out of all proportion to her actual exploits, but fully merited by the efforts and sufferings of past generations of her sons. Educated Italians are loth to speak of the war itself, for it was marked by unpardonable incapacity, combined with cowardice and vanity among the leaders, although the troops, both on sea and land, showed admirable constancy and courage. Experts say that battle should not have been offered at Custozza—already the scene of an Italian defeat by the same enemy in 1848; and certainly neither Victor Emmanuel nor La Marmora had the grasp of conditions which would have enabled them, even there, to strike a decisive blow at Austria, nine days before Prussia did so at Königgrätz. Superior in numbers, strong in the knowledge of the great strength of their Northern ally, they could and

should have gathered the first laurels of the war. But they hesitated, scattered their forces, and sustained at Custozza a crushing defeat which effectually crippled their movements for two all-important weeks. By the time they had pulled themselves together Königgrätz had been lost and won; Austria had hastily recalled her Italian garrisons to repel the Prussian invaders, who marched triumphantly almost to the gates of Vienna, and had tried to get rid of Venetia the day after the battle, sending a messenger to Napoleon III. with the offer of the disputed territory and an entreaty that he would negotiate a truce. Venice was assured to Italy, but the Italians could not accept gracefully what their ally had won for them. To use an Americanism, they "were out for trouble," and they wanted a run for their money. So, while Europe looked on, amused and rather scandalized by this tardy fervour, General Cialdini crossed the Po and "conquered" Venetia, where there was scarcely an Austrian soldier left. A six weeks' campaign sufficed to salve the Italian vanity, further ministered to by Garibaldi and his braves, who played about a little on the Tyrolese frontier. Nobody took much notice of either. The questions pending were practically solved already, and Italy's part in the achievements was not much more effectual than that of the American citizen who called his neighbours together to see him vindicate his patriotic feelings, during the Cuban war, by decapitating his Spanish cock in a New England backyard.

Matters were much worse at sea. The country had spent, since 1860, three hundred millions of francs on its fleet; but had paid no attention to discipline, practice, or drill. There must have been at least a few capable officers in the service; but Admiral Persano, a hopelessly

inefficient person, was picked out for the supreme command. He was scarcely a sailor; he had conferred the promotion to the rank of Admiral on himself while acting as Minister of Marine, and he appears to have taken no steps to provide the costly warships, for which the people sweated and starved, with either trained gunners, skilled engineers, or competent officers. The story of Lissa is an agony. Persano beats about, flies from any encounter, sends agonized telegrams to the Government prophesying fatal disaster and imploring for help, and has to be absolutely kicked into action by the furious authorities. He has altogether eleven battleships and seventeen smaller vessels, a fleet which was considered exceedingly fine and strong in those days, but he telegraphs for more. He picks out the small fortified island of Lissa—loses men, wastes tons of ammunition, disables one of his best ships, and is caught and destroyed by Tegethoff, with seven shabby old ironclads and one frigate, manned in part too by Venetians, of all people! Persano's sailors fight like heroes; the chief gunner of the *Re d'Italia* fires the last shot from the sinking ship when the water is up to his waist; the men go down cheering and shouting "Venice is ours!" Persano cannot even get himself killed. He moves his flag from one ship to another, issues confused orders, which are misunderstood or disobeyed—and *lives* to go back to his King, to be charged with treason and cowardice, to be convicted of incapacity and negligence, to be expelled from the service. "It required a face!" as the Romans say.

Tegethoff covered himself with glory; but he must have been bitterly disappointed when, so soon after the battle, came the cession of Venice. Only the hope of saving the province for his country induced him to face

such odds; but the change had long been registered among the sealed orders of Fate, and the loss was a gain to Austria—if anything ever can be a gain to that eternally unlucky empire. A large, deeply disaffected alien population can never be anything but a drain and an embarrassment to any government. Spain has found new life since she was cut loose from the log of Cuba. But Austria's troubles are unfortunately more deeply seated than ever were Spain's. They have their source in serious flaws of outlook and character, in class traditions as bitter and uncompromising as they were in Maria Teresa's time, and, worst of all in this, that if she were to rid herself of all her alien or disaffected inhabitants, there would be very little left of Austria except Vienna and the Tyrol, where, by the by, there still exists the most violent hatred and contempt for the Italians. "Die Leut' sind nicht des Landes werth,"[1] say the sturdy Tyrolese, wondering why Providence has bestowed the beautiful garden across the frontier on a race so deficient in all the virtues that the mountaineers admire. Perhaps the latter have hardly a fair opportunity of observing it; the wandering organ-grinders and pedlars and vagabonds who find their way to Botzen and Brixen and Salzburg can hardly be called more favourable specimens of Italians than Garibaldi and his detested red-shirts, who left execrable memories of themselves in the country.

By October all interest in Northern developments was over, and we were watching the Mexican tragedy with the pitiful sympathy which had been aroused by the Empress Carlotta's fruitless visit to Rome in the summer, and its sad, though for her merciful, ending. It will be remembered that four years earlier three great powers,

[1] "The people are unworthy of the country."

England, France, and Spain, had united to correct the exceedingly bad manners of the Mexican Republic, which had been outraging international decency in its treatment of foreign residents. Soon after the arrival of the allies' fleets and troops, the President, Juarez, had found it wise to listen to their representations, and had entered into a convention which fully satisfied England and Spain and might have been expected to prove acceptable to France. But France stood in rather a different position towards the Republic. She had many subjects there, who had suffered loss of property estimated at 12,000,000 francs, and they clamoured for indemnity. The cost to France of her part in the punitive expedition had been high, 270,000,000 francs, and Napoleon III. was anxious to shoulder it safely out of the budget and also to have something besides moral prestige to show the country, some solid advantage which would please the French and increase his fluctuating but all-important asset, popularity.

So he refused Juarez's terms, and decided not only to continue the war, but to establish an Empire which should owe its inception to him and remain a kind of tributary of France. A great name, a real name was wanted, and, like Napoleon I., he went to Austria to find it. The Archduke Maximilian, the brother of the Emperor Franz Joseph, was the man he fixed upon, young, good-looking, greatly beloved at home, and married to the most charming of women, Maria Carlotta, the daughter of Leopold I., King of the Belgians, whose mother was a daughter of Louis Philippe. Mexican affairs had long been in a parlous condition, and Maximilian was not to be dazzled into accepting the crown until he was assured by the fashionable method of a plebiscite that the people really desired him to reign

over them. We all know now how the plebiscite was managed. It differed little from many of the European ones, being engineered from beginning to end by the advocates of the new Monarchy, who managed to disqualify the votes of the large masses who opposed them. The French agents of Napoleon III. had had plenty of practice in such matters, and succeeded in sending to Miramar a deputation which looked so thoroughly Mexican that Maximilian was deceived into believing it genuine. Dear, beautiful Miramar! The year after he was shot I visited the place, and sat before the writing-table on which still lay the pen with which he signed his agreement to the deputies' proposals and his renunciation of all claim to the throne of Austria. His brother the Emperor looked on the scheme with disfavour. The records of intimate relations between France and Austria, as exemplified in the fate of Marie Antoinette and the disappointments following on the marriage of Marie Louise to Napoleon I., were hardly favourable portents. But his objections were overridden, and he had to satisfy himself with separating the new Emperor's interests from those of Austria absolutely and finally. Each Hapsburg seems doomed to leave one blot on an otherwise blameless name: Franz Joseph, the beloved, the honourable, the revered, saved himself in 1866 by the heartless immolation of the noble Benedek; Maximilian, the gallant young martyr to French cupidity and French ambition, travelled straight from Miramar to Paris, and told Napoleon III. that his renunciation of all claim to the Austrian succession had been wrung from him by coercion and was null and void.

The Church tells us that we should be thankful to receive the punishment of our faults in this life rather

than in the next. Franz Joseph and Maximilian surely expiated theirs, the one by every sorrow that can fall on a monarch, a husband, and a father; the other by the heroic generosity which made him cry "Long live Mexico!" with his last breath.

His wife never knew of his fate, and when it overtook him he believed her to be dead. They were so devoted to one another that, although he was prepared to do his duty to the end in the mission into which he had been entrapped, yet the belief that she could not share it reconciled him, they say, to his early death. She had left him a year earlier to seek, by a personal appeal to Napoleon, the promised aid which he had cynically withdrawn when Maximilian found it impossible to pay the further promised instalment on the 270,000,000 francs which France had sunk in the Mexican enterprise. The first 64,000,000, besides the 12,000,000 indemnities to French subjects, he had paid out of the funds advanced by a London banker, a negotiation by the way which had put many millions of francs into the pockets of French financiers. But the National party in Mexico had never accepted his rule; he found himself plunged into all the costly tribulation of Civil War from the moment of his landing; the French had lost confidence in the Mexican scheme, and Napoleon III., when the Government of the United States brought heavy pressure to bear upon him, was thoroughly alarmed and became anxious to drop the whole thing as quickly as possible. He made the default of payment of the yearly instalment the excuse for withdrawing the French troops and refusing the pecuniary and moral aid which he had solemnly promised to furnish until the Empire should be firmly established in Mexico.

The Empress Carlotta, probably underestimating the resolutely hostile attitude of the United States Government, believed that she could prevail upon Napoleon III. to change his mind, and early in 1866 besought Maximilian to let her go to Europe alone and argue with the powerful traitor. The history of her mission is one of the saddest ever recorded. At first the French Emperor refused to see her. When at last, after humiliating rebuffs, she succeeded in obtaining an interview, his wife was present—the old resource of the mean man who fears that his heart may soften to a sweet, loving woman pleading her husband's cause with the eloquence of despair. Carlotta's heart must have failed her when she saw the other woman there. Eugénie's presence proclaimed the verdict before Napoleon III. had spoken. Maximilian's wife pleaded, argued, finally went down on her knees before the hard-hearted bourgeois couple, and prayed for the love of Heaven that they would take pity on her husband's desperate situation. It was all of their making, but they had only harsh words for the distracted woman, who finally sprang to her feet with a bitter cry of self-reproach for having forgotten that she, a daughter of the Bourbons, was dealing with mere upstarts and adventurers like the Bonapartes. It must have been quite a relief to their nerves when she fainted away at their feet and was carried out of the room.

One resource, as she hoped, still remained, and she came to Rome in the early summer of 1866 to try to persuade the Pope to consent to the sequestration of Church property in Mexico, and thus provide funds to carry on the war. But it was impossible for Pius IX. to grant such an utterly unconstitutional request. The property was

not his to dispose of, and to his deep regret he could do nothing to help Maximilian, whose situation was daily becoming more hopeless, not only through the opposition of the National party and the guerrilla warfare carried on by them, but through the estrangement of those who had been inclined to support him and who were now indignant at his unwise and arbitrary measures. Carlotta realized that all was lost, and little by little it became evident that her mind was failing under the fearful strain. She was so pretty and attractive, her misfortunes so heavy and undeserved, that the warm-hearted Romans felt much sympathy for her, especially when strange stories began to be told, of how Carlotta imagined that some one was trying to poison her, of how she had tried to poison herself by drinking the ink on her writing-table, of how she had attempted to throw herself out of a window. Finally she became hopelessly insane, and her brother, who had taken her misfortunes with truly Leopoldian calmness till then, was obliged for decency's sake to bring her home to Belgium and provide her with an asylum in one of his châteaux, where the remainder of her darkened life could be passed in retirement and safety.

I met this chivalrous gentleman in Vienna when he brought his daughter to marry the Crown Prince, and though I trust I have a proper respect for Royalty as such, I must in conscience say that King Leopold did not impress me as a favourable example of the species. He seemed theatrical and insincere. Looking down at me from his towering height, he held my hand and poured out to me the undying love and gratitude which, he declared, burnt in his heart for England. "I only exist because your noble country so wills," he ex-

claimed, while his long beard waggled benevolently above the tapestry of decorations which adorned his coat. I was rather glad when the kind, charming Queen turned to me and drew me into conversation with herself.

Under our feet, during a part of that triumphal day, lay the coffin of Leopold's brother-in-law, poor doomed Maximilian, who was, as all the world knows, executed on the 16th of June, 1867. An outrageous photograph of his corpse, stripped of all clothing, was taken by his murderers and was for a long time on view in the public library of a large town in the United States. The body was afterwards brought home by Admiral Tegethoff, the hero of Lissa, on board the *Novara*, and at last laid to rest among all the other dead Hapsburgs in the Imperial vaults of Vienna. One day I had wandered through those grim halls which branch off on either side into transepts and chapels piled to the ceiling with coffins no one would dare to move now, for they would fall to pieces at a touch. Somehow the sentence "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," had struck me as a kindly one which ought always to be obeyed. This harvest of death, garnered through long centuries, had become a mere lumber of corruption which had no right above ground. It should long ago have been confided humbly to mother earth to dispose of. The atmosphere was unbreathable, and I was turning to flee, when a single ray of sunshine from a distant opening far overhead attracted my attention, and I made for it as hastily as I could without falling over the endless rows of black coffins that lay in the central aisle. When I reached the spot I found the little sunbeam resting on a coffin, not black, but pure white, with a name and a date in gold:

"Maximilian, 1832 1867." A wreath of sweet fresh flowers had been laid on it that morning. That was in 1882. Some one had remembered, for fifteen years.[1]

I was at Miramar in 1868, and never managed to visit the place again, though I always hoped to do so when we were living in Vienna. Now I am rather glad I did not, for it would have been hard to better the impression I got of it on the perfect October day we spent there. The Adriatic was one stretch of calm sapphire, and Miramar lay on the waves like a great white pearl washed up by the sea. Built of purest white marble, its front rose sheer from the water, which lapped in crystal wavelets against the walls a few feet below the ground-floor windows and sent soft music all through the house. Good people had lived there; the atmosphere of those lovely rooms was pure and gay; there was a noble simplicity about it all, and one felt that each detail had been thought out to fitness and beauty without any taint of ostentation or luxury for its own sake. Beyond the house the garden bordered the sea, with long white balustrades where the roses climbed over and looked at themselves in the water. In one or two places the balustrades opened on to a flight of broad white steps leading down into a little harbour surrounded by low walls of the same snowy Carrara, pierced and fretted to let the sun through on the dainty shallops that danced at anchor, waiting for the happy master and mistress who would never return. The place was so exquisite, so unearthly in its stainless whiteness and delicately stately lines, that it seemed to me —I was only seventeen when I saw it—a fairy palace

[1] It is said that the Prince of Wales (our Edward VII.) got possession of Maximilian's bracelet, and was buried with it on his wrist.

reared by no human hands and only visible to mortals by some special grace, sure to melt into the mist and float back to fairyland some summer night of full moon and warm winds. Everything in the house had been kept just as Maximilian and Carlotta left it—a book thrown down on a table, a chair pushed back from a window, the writing-paper, the very cigarettes lying temptingly close at hand: one would have thought the owners had slipped out of one of the long French windows to have a look at the sea, and might return at any moment.

The visit to Miramar was the crowning pleasure of a wonderful summer for me. For some reason I had that year been allowed to arrange the programme for the three or four months during which we always had to be absent from Rome, and I had made our travels include a number of places which I had long been wishing to see. The preceding summer had been spent partly at Venice, then in Geneva with the regulation visits to Chamounix and Montreux, and had ended with a stay at Aix-les-Bains, where we made some amusing acquaintances, notably that of a little lady from Bologna who rejoiced in the name of Gozzadina Gozzadini. She was about five feet high, amazingly pretty, and the most jealous little firebrand that ever lived. We had with us the friend of whom I have spoken before, Lily Conrad, a girl to whom I was slavishly devoted, but who was anything but convenient to take about, for every head turned as she passed and whenever she appeared she excited a little storm of admiration and curiosity. Her people were Southerners, driven abroad by the ruinous results of the war, and those Southern women have a strange magnetic beauty which generally throws everything near them into the

shade. My friend was much too tall, but that only served to lift her golden head and perfect face above the crowd, and the crowd fell down and worshipped gladly. I remember that Worth, the original Worth, was at Aix that year. We passed him as he lounged on a bench in the gardens of Marlioz, and when Lily swept past him the man started up with a gasp. "Je voudrais l'habiller, celle-là!" he murmured enviously. But he could not have improved her. Her wardrobe was of the most limited kind, but whatever she wore seemed costly and beautiful. I remember once going out to spend the day with her and her stepfather, the Marchese Cavaletti, at a place they had at Frascati. He drove us himself, and beside the phaeton rode one of Lily's many slaves, a handsome young Frenchman in the Pontifical Zouaves. Most girls would have looked up something decent to wear; not so Lily. It was a hot day, and she had found an old muslin frock with black dots washed so often that each dot had opened into a hole. With the calmness of supreme beauty she put the rag on, and when I protested merely said, "Why, the holes make it cooler, my dear!" When we arrived at Frascati the midday sun was scorching and I was conscious of being as red as a tomato. "Come along, we will wash our faces," said Lily, and she dragged a horse-bucket full of cold water out on to the bricks of the courtyard, knelt down, and plunged her head in it. When she looked up, the crystal drops clinging to those deep waves of golden hair, running down from her dark eyes and June-rose cheeks, drenching the old frock and scattering showers around her, she laughed in triumph at our faces, for we three were gazing at her as devoutly as if she had been Venus arising from the waves. It was a picture such as one does not see twice in a lifetime.

She danced out into the sun again to get dry, and the sun, which would have taken the skin off any other face, only made hers more perfect in its matchless colouring.

All this will explain why Lily got into disgrace with little Marchesa Gozzadina. The Marchese, a susceptible young gentleman, had been making eyes at the American girl and had begun to follow her round rather persistently. Lily took no particular notice of him, but I think Gozzadina had been nursing her wrath for two or three days when one morning Lily and I wandered aimlessly into her room in the hotel, and began to talk about the endearing subject of clothes. Gozzadina ran to a bureau to pull out some cherished chiffons to show us, and we followed her. The door was open into an empty room beyond, and Lily slipped in to see what it contained. Gozzadina sprang after her with a cry, "Come out of my husband's room! How dare you go in there?" And standing on tiptoe she administered one or two sounding thwacks on poor Lily's shoulders. It seemed incredible that such an atom of a creature could hit so hard. Lily could have taken her up and dropped her out of the window with one hand, but she only considered her calmly for a moment and then left the room, I following as fast as I could, for there was the light of fury in the little lady's eyes! The worst of it was that we depended on Gozzadina for a good deal of chaperonage at that moment, my mother having run off to Paris for a fortnight, after commending her tribe of young people to one or two married women in the same hotel. And we were a tribe that year—Annie and I and Lily, the little half-sister and brother with their nurses, and two exceedingly pretty maids from the "Castelli" who required much

looking after in fashionable hotels. Their mother was a stern old peasant woman known to us as "Mamma Rosa"; her three daughters, besides being pretty, had remarkable voices, and more than one impresario tried to lure them on to the stage; but Mamma Rosa indignantly flouted the tempting offers. Was the theatre a proper place for virtuous girls? No, indeed, no daughter of hers should ever embrace such a disreputable career! Her anxiety as to their morals caused us a trying moment that year. When we left Rome several friends came to see us off at the station, and Mamma Rosa, nearly six feet tall, in her peasant costume, loomed up in the background. She had felt it her duty to be present. When all the goodbyes were said, and the friends, among whom were some young men, stood clear of the carriage, Mamma Rosa stepped forward and in a stentorian voice thus addressed my mother: "May you have a good journey, gracious lady, and bring back all these beautiful girls, your daughters and mine, and the Signorina Lili there, in good health—*e tutte vergini!*"

The train moved out at that moment; but all its puffing and rumbling could not drown the echo of some irrepressible laughter on the platform.

The next year, as I said before, I took the family whither I wished; and we began by spending two months in Dresden, where Annie and I went nearly crazy over our first experience of Wagnerian Opera. Fortunately for us the Master was still in his first style. I do not think we should have loved him so much if we had not heard *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* first, if we had not come to the later works by gentle degrees. As it was, *Lohengrin* opened up such amazing new avenues

of joyful wonder in our minds that we—who usually talked from morning to night—were literally dumb for two whole days after hearing it. Fräulein Mallinger sang Elsa. We were told that Wagner himself had taught her every note and movement; and the result was a perfection of rendering which has made it difficult for me to appreciate other singers in the part. Her Lohengrin was Tischachek—old already, but singing splendidly still, and acting with all the *élan* and passion of youth. How we loved that Dresden Opera House, with its nobly careful productions, its perfect orchestras, its early hours and simple ways! It was so delightful to be able to walk in there in short skirt and hat, feast on music without all the bother of evening gown and closed carriage, walk home again in the clear summer night, and get to bed by eleven o'clock! There were open-air concerts, too, in public gardens—music and bands everywhere—besides the inexhaustible pleasures of the picture-gallery, and the modern paintings exhibitions, which happened to be particularly good that year.

The feeling against Prussia was still very strong in Saxony in 1868. It was only two years since Prussia's imperious manifesto had broken up the "Bund"; and the easy-going Saxons, to whom everything Prussian—speech, manners, religion, and general attitude towards life—was intensely antipathetic, had of course thrown in their lot with Austria, believing, as most people did before that illuminating seven weeks' war, that all the real strength was on her side. The avowed causes of great wars always seem so insignificant that one wonders the historians have the face to record them at all. The world looked on in amazement when

the entire German Confederation was broken up because Prussia and Austria could not agree about their joint housekeeping in Schleswig-Holstein. The quarrel resembled the beginning of those private ones which, after years and years of friction, are put forward in a divorce court as a plea for separation. One couple, I remember, disagreed a week after their marriage on the question of taking a cab or walking home in the rain, and treated each other so badly that they finally obtained a *decree nisi*. Another harmonious pair could not come to terms as to the right hour for breakfast, and carried on the contention till both parties had something really worth while to complain about. The Great Powers seem to be entirely deprived of the dramatic sense, and take no trouble at all to work up a sensational issue to present to the public. Austria and Prussia were quite at one about recovering Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark in 1864; but when the Duchies were in their own keeping they could not agree as to who should be their caretaker there. Bismarck solemnly informed Europe that this was a question of international importance—that the little territories meant everything to Germany at large, and must be governed in the sense that Germany at large (of course not Prussia in particular) desired. The great man was listened to respectfully enough, since he chose to thus declare himself; but everybody knew that Germany at large detested everything Prussian, and that Prussia's intention was to correct this æsthetic error by means of the needle-gun, which only she of all European nations (except Russia) had been intelligent enough to adopt. The needle-gun and Clam Gallas's incompetency won Königgrätz for her; the needle-gun had subdued Saxony ten days earlier; and Saxony's

Sovereign, like a wise man, had accepted the new order of things, and kept his crown—in a way. But he and his people knew that they had met their masters; and while I was in Dresden, in 1868, the masters, Frederick William of Prussia and Bismarck, came over to have a look at them and review the troops.

Then the bright little city changed its aspect, and smiled no longer. Everywhere one met sullen faces, heard growled imprecations. What did the "verdammte Berliner" mean by riding in among them and reminding them of their misfortunes, which they had been trying hard for two years to forget? What right had the King of Prussia to review their beloved, untidy, ill-drilled Saxon boys? They would show him what they thought of him, that they would!

So they received him in scowling silence, which I think he did not even notice (for he was a silent person himself), and which probably amused Count Bismarck considerably. He never felt really comfortable unless he was markedly unpopular. And, for us strangers who looked on, that review was one of the most depressing sights possible. The two Sovereigns never spoke to one another the whole time. The King of Prussia's usually kind old face looked that day as hard as iron, with set brows and mouth drawn down in disapproval; and the expression on the countenance of the aged King of Saxony was one of such deep humiliation and sorrow that it brought tears to one's eyes. Their respective Staffs, though forced to ride together, were silent and cold; the dust was choking; the men, sulky and despondent, paraded atrociously. It was a real relief when the melancholy spectacle came to end; and when, a day or two later, the "verdammte Berliner" departed, the

Saxons rejoiced openly, and forgot all about them as quickly as possible in true Saxon fashion.

Who could have foretold that two years later these very Saxon troops would cover themselves with glory at Saint Privat and Sedan, even as they had done before, at Waterloo? Of course much can be done with an army in two years, but one must also give its full due to the fact that in France they were fighting a national enemy for the very existence of the Fatherland, while in 1866 they were taking up arms only against a relation, so to speak—a most irritating and meddlesome one certainly, yet speaking their own language and as truly German as themselves.

One gets one's history in funny scattered bits. Only four or five years ago I had for a little while a Danish manservant who was a source of constant delight on account of the stories he told me. To quote an illustrious authoress, "it is not generally known" that servants are often uncommonly good story-tellers. Some of the queerest tales I ever gathered were given to me by servants, notably "Antonino Scaffati," told me in chapters by my brother's Calabrian butler, night after night, as he waited on me at my solitary dinner. In Italy we make friends of our servants, and they kiss our hands and bring up their children to wait on ours. The term "famiglia" (family) applies exclusively to the portion of the household that lives downstairs, never to the masters, in my part of Italy, and the tie between the two is very real and lasting. We take our mutual responsibilities pretty seriously; the masters are served with the heart as well as the hands, and the servants know that if they behave themselves they can live with us till they die, and their children will be looked after if they need it. I

suppose it is owing to these inborn traditions of mine that my servants (and they have been of every nationality under the sun almost) have always been good and faithful. I can scarcely remember a bad one anywhere. Well, my Dane, John, was like all the rest, ready to go to any trouble to make me comfortable or to give me pleasure; and when he found that I liked stories he gave me streams of them, always from the peasant point of view, about Denmark, about "his" King and Queen as he proudly called them, about the "Feuer Prinzessin," the French wife of the Crown Prince, whose passion for watching conflagrations would bring her out at any hour of the night or day if she heard the fire-engines go past, thus earning for her the title of "Fire Princess." But the quaintest of all was a little anecdote about Bismarck in 1864. The Prussians had invaded Jutland and were taking possession of Fredericia, John's own city. John's grandmother, by the way, refused to move with the women and children, who were all sent off into the country after the battle, when the Danes decided to evacuate the place, and the Prussians, under General Wrangel, were to take possession. "Leave my city where I was born and have lived in honour for seventy years?" cried the brave old dame. "No indeed! Go, you cowards! You are no true Danes! I will go out and meet these robbers and tell them what I think of them!" And so she did. Taking up her position on the top step of a monument outside the city gate, she awaited the approach of the Prussian troops, and as each regiment marched past her she shook her fist at its Colonel and called him every name she could lay her tongue to. The soldiers first laughed and ended by cheering the gallant old woman. I do not know whether she recognized

Bismarck, the author of Jutland's disgrace, but I fancy Von Moltke, who was riding beside him, came in for the heaviest vials of her wrath.

The Von Moltkes were originally Mecklenburgers, but in the troubles of 1808 had fled to Jutland and had lived there for many years. Helmuth von Moltke not only had a very warm feeling for the province, but strongly disapproved of the whole war, so that it was much against his will that he was obliged to enter the city which had sheltered his boyhood, as a conquering warrior.

He knew every street and house in it; Bismarck had never seen it before and looked around him curiously. "That is a fine house," he remarked, pointing to a large, imposing building which cast all the others into the shade; "I will take up my quarters there."

"Very appropriate," replied Von Moltke dryly. "That is the State Prison!"

General Wrangel[1] must have been a very old gentleman when he led the Prussians into Jutland, for, not long afterwards, he retired from the active list, covered with years and honours, and became the privileged *enfant terrible* of Berlin, where Annie's brother-in-law was given a post of anxious responsibility when he was appointed his aide-de-camp. The General's mind was failing, but in the most cheerful way. He loved society, would go to all the parties, and spent much time in the Public Gardens, where he insisted on stopping every pretty girl he met, telling her she was a darling and chucking her under the chin. The children adored him, and would leave all their

[1] Wrangel was born in 1784; entered army in 1796; brought back news of Eylau in 1807 to Königsberg; was on the active list from 1796 to 1866, in which latter year, although he wished to accompany the troops, he was thought too old for work and was retired; died November 1877.

games to run up to him for the sugar-plums he carried about for them. Oscar had to see that his pockets were full of these before he started on his walk, and most of the young man's time was spent in making apologies for his Chief's innocent but undiscriminating gallantries "Unter den Linden." I think it was on that famous promenade that one young lady received a very pretty compliment from a handsome lieutenant who knew his Heine. He stopped before her, and she drew back in surprise, for he was an utter stranger.

"Gnädiges Fräulein," he began, "I have a message for you. May I deliver it?"

"A message for me?" she exclaimed. "From whom?"

"From a great poet. He said:

'Und wenn du eine Rose siehst,
So sag' ich lass sie grüssen.'[1]

I obey and greet the rose."

History has not recorded the end of the romance, so doubtless it was a happy one.

[1] "And if thou shalt behold a rose,
Then say I send her greeting."

CHAPTER XVII

DISTINGUISHED FOREIGNERS AND FAMOUS AMERICANS

Admiral Wrangel—Rudolf Lehmann—Lisa's début—Madame Helbig—Liszt—His romance—Lothrop Motley—Prescott—Lowell—The elder Agassiz—Bayard Taylor—General Grant—Sherman—McClellan—A disappointed man—Longfellow—A memorable day at Sant' Onofrio.

THE name of Oscar's old General reminds me of the famous Admiral Wrangel, who, I think, was his brother. He spent one or two winters in Rome somewhere between 1865 and 1868, and we saw a great deal of his daughter-in-law and granddaughters. The Admiral was a gentle little old man in delicate health, and it seemed difficult to connect him with the frozen island in the Arctic seas and the Alaskan volcano which both bear his name. The girls became great friends of ours, and at once took their places in the informal musical and artistic circle which gathered in the Palazzo Odescalchi. Two notable figures in it were Rudolf Lehmann and his wife, he dominant and imposing, she, almost as gifted in her way, a gentle, sweet-voiced woman who never talked about her work or herself. Mr. Lehmann's appearance was peculiarly striking. His snow-white hair crowned a perfectly colourless, strongly aquiline face, out of which shone black eyes of uncanny size and brilliancy. He made the impression of having come from some icy planet where there were no such tints as our earthly reds and browns. His voice, too, in speaking, had a curious

timbre that reminded one of the north wind whistling through the trees. But he was a cheerful, talkative man, and if his laugh was a little cold too, at any rate it came very often. His wife was a woman of a type rarer now than formerly, a delightful singer, an artist to the ends of her fingers, but shy and gracious as the very exceptional Duchess whom Taine describes so admiringly in his book on England, naïvely holding her up as the type of British aristocratic womanhood. Perhaps in Taine's still Victorian epoch great ladies did blush like schoolgirls when strangers were presented to them; but that artless accomplishment has so long gone out of fashion that the beauty-makers at so much an hour advertise certified cures for it. That seems hardly necessary in an age when women lift up their voices in public on every conceivable question, and publicity at any price is the avowed aim of social life. They speak uncommonly well sometimes, but at a cost of which they themselves are unconscious—the cost of charm. That depends on a certain delicate mystery, on the rich reserves of a life led for home and friends, on which the outsider can only look as at the lighted windows of a beautiful house. The tempered radiance which they give forth indicates a thousandfold greater glow and light within.

Rudolf Lehmann's wife was a true artist in a very imaginative feminine way. When we were all at Sorrento together during the "Mowens" summer, she was illustrating Chamisso's "Frauen Leben und Lieben," and now the poems never seem quite complete to me without those pictures. Of all the poems in the world that little cycle seems to me to come closest to the inner workings of a woman's heart through maidenhood, wifehood, motherhood, widowhood. The "Lieder" came to me

first as poems; then as pictures; then, a year or two later, as music, for they were divinely set either by Schumann or Abt—I blush to say I forget which—and I heard them sung till they were a part of the best and happiest years of my life. I wonder where all the gratitude one feels for such things is due?

There was a great fount of music in the Lehmann family. Lisa, so well known now for her charming compositions, was a tiny girl in the nursery when I first knew them all, fair-haired and blue-eyed like her mother. Then they left Rome and went to live in England, and I did not see them again till Lisa was grown up and her mother brought her down to Rome to take us all by storm with her singing. It was a reception day, and the rooms were crowded with people and full of sunshine and flowers, I remember, and dear Mrs. Lehmann, pretty and fragile as ever, wanted to hear the musical world's opinion on her daughter's attainments after the careful training which had been bestowed upon them. Countess Gigliucci was present, and another lady whose opinion was considered worth having, Madame H——, a lady well known in the Paris of the Third Empire; she had a beautiful voice, and had subjugated Napoleon III. and his gay satellites by the singing of coon songs. Coon songs and pretty American women were still novelties in Europe in the 'sixties, I believe. Sgambati was with us too that day, and Madame Helbig—so altogether it was rather an imposing audience. Lisa was white as death when she stood up to sing, and her mother had tears of nervousness in her eyes. What makes the *real* people always so humble, I wonder? When the song ended, the hush of breathless appreciation lasted for a moment, and then Countess Gigliucci and Sgambati and

Madame Helbig and a dozen others pressed forward to thank and congratulate the girl. Not so Madame H——. She maintained a frozen silence and looked deeply displeased, and I think Mrs. Lehmann, in her sweet honesty, was terribly troubled by the lady's attitude. As events have shown, it was a tribute.

Madame Helbig's name requires comment—outside of the circle where she was a dominant figure for many years without accepting a single one of the conventions and traditions which ruled it. Her name ought to have been "Das Ding an sich"; she was so independent of the ordinary standards as to seem really unconscious of them, and nobody attempted to weigh her conduct by them. This does not mean that she was an intellectual or moral anarchist; her idea of the duties of life was unusually high and sacred, but outside that domain she settled every question for herself with high-handed calm, invulnerable to approval or disapproval. Enormously tall and disproportionately stout even for her height, when she sailed into a room full of ordinary men and women it was like seeing some mammoth warship bearing down on a fleet of pleasure-boats. All through her life it had been impossible for her to get into a real frock, and in all the years that I knew her I never saw her in anything but a plain black skirt and jacket, the latter cut straight like a man's coat and provided with two pockets always measured on a Peters' edition, so that she could carry her classical scores about with her everywhere. Her thick brown hair was chopped off exactly at the top of her narrow linen collar: it would have given her apoplexy to attempt a coiffure, and no hairpins would have resisted the wild toss of the head with which she sometimes emphasized her speech. Her features would have been

fine—in a less redundant setting; but features, figure, dress, and all the rest of it, were forgotten when once one had met the fire, the glance of happy battle in her blue eyes, or heard the ringing tones of her great, honest voice. She was a Russian, a Princess Schachowskoy; and as a girl had been looked upon by her family as a melancholy example of degeneracy, for she only cared for two things, music and archæology. On coming to Rome archæology had got the upper hand, and she would spend day after day nosing about in the catacombs, till, as her people complained, she was such a mass of dust and cobwebs that they could not brush her clean.

Now the German Embassy in Rome is a very complete and imperial institution, having a department of archæology in its great palace on the Capitoline, with a distinguished professor in charge. This learned man found in the young Princess Schachowskoy an apt and most interesting pupil. He guided her on many underground excursions, and at last, gathering courage from the shades of Roman heroes and Christian martyrs, ventured to ask her to be his wife. The marriage looked incongruous enough, but it turned out very happily. The bride dropped her title and threw herself heart and soul into her husband's pursuits, while he, good, quiet man, accepted the musical half of her life with perfect equanimity. Her salon became the gathering-place for celebrities of both spheres. Liszt adored her, and would play by the hour with her or for her. Her own gifts in that way were superlative. Liszt and Sgambati could never have enough of her music. Under her hands the piano spoke like an orchestra. In a year or two after her marriage something else occasionally spoke too, an imperious baby whom she entirely refused ever to leave at home. To see Madame

and Professor and Miss Helbig arrive at a party was really funny. Madame always carried her daughter herself, and the Professor followed, abstracted and calm, with a basket containing Miss Helbig's feeding-bottle and other infantine necessities carefully tied up in a napkin. When Madame had been lured to the piano and a roomful of people waited eagerly for her to begin, she relinquished the baby to its Papa and swept herself and her audience away into another world, a world of glorious sound and progression which has no connection with domestic responsibilities at all. In some funny way all this reacted on the child, who in due time grew up to be a very thoughtful, gifted woman with one great desire in life, to do good. The first children's hospital had been started some time before, by the Duchessa Salviati, in a most original way. After the Civil War Rome was flooded with rich Americans whose fortunes had either burst out of the ground in "gushers" of petroleum or had been made by army contracts. These last did not confer distinction on their owners, for, from the days of the Revolution down, the army contractor has only too often proved himself a heartless, unpatriotic wretch, cheating the poor soldiers of food and clothing so shamelessly that George Washington exclaims, in one of those letters which seem to have been written with a red-hot pen, "If I had the power I would hang four or five of these damnable scoundrels in every town to serve as an example to the rest!" I quote from memory, but I think these were the precise words. My dear mother used to say, "I will receive oil; the Lord gave it to these good people Himself, and they will learn English and manners in time; but 'Shoddy' I will not have in my house!"

The charitable Duchess Salviati, remembering doubt-

less the Italian proverb which says "Riches have neither smell nor colour," had no prejudices about "tainted money." The "nouveaux riches" were eager to get into Society, and she let it be known that whoever sent a fat subscription to the Children's Hospital should receive cards for her balls. Never did anything go up so fast as that hospital! But the good Sisters of Charity who took care of it and the kind persons who visited it felt as if it would never be large enough to take in all the little sufferers who needed care. The Romans of the poorer classes are woefully ignorant of infant hygiene. My mother was present when two *contadine* from the hills brought in very sick babies. "What have you fed this child on?" the doctor inquired of one. "Chestnuts and water—I had nothing else!" was the reply. Turning to the other woman he repeated the question. "*My* baby had wine and coffee!" she announced proudly. Both children were in the last stages of fever and emaciation.

Daisy Helbig's heart went out to the crowds of sick children, and she devoted herself to them almost entirely; and her mother took up the work with all the enthusiasm of her great, uncompromising character. And then came a day which was a very sad one for Madame Helbig's friends. The piano was closed for ever and the musical world knew her no more. She could not serve two masters.

I think it would have broken Liszt's heart, but Liszt was dead. His presence was so bound up with Rome that I have often felt, in passing Palazzo Caffarelli, that I should see him mounting the long, sun-bathed way to Madame Helbig's old apartment there, the apartment which, as she used to say, made every other house in the

city seem dark, coming down from what she called "Dieser *Prall* von Sonnenschein." Liszt was a child of the sun too, and had plenty of it in his rooms at the Convent of Santa Francesca Romana, where he spent his later years. His was a happy life, for besides his genius and his fame he had the highest grace of all—he was always beloved. Much has been said in other countries about his vanity and his affectations. Those who knew him in Rome were never aware of such faults in him. His strange ugly face beamed with such gentle kindness, he was so quick to understand where a word of sympathy and encouragement would raise some desponding heart to the seventh heaven of hope and joy, he was so generous with his adorable music, always playing for those who wished it, so humbly faithful to his religion, so merciful to any in distress, that it was impossible not to revere and love the man. One very great lady had loved and followed him about all his life. They were both so old when I saw them that it was out of the question to connect any scandal with the attachment, which, I believe, on his side at any rate, had never overstepped the limits of devoted friendship. But the Princess had a husband, and I am afraid he had much reason to complain of her attitude. When she was between sixty and seventy, or thereabouts, the Prince died, and it looked as if his widow even at that age might persuade the great musician to marry her. But Liszt retired from the difficult situation quite gracefully. He assumed deacon's orders and became an Abbé, and withdrew to the dignified retreat of an independent apartment within the walls of a convent. The Princess, whom I remember as a quaint, prim little old lady, with extraordinarily bright eyes and a close-fitting black bonnet, accepted his renunciation of the

world in good part but did not long survive it. She must have been a person of unusual strength of character, for, at the age of seventy, she, who had never touched a piano in her life (though she knew everything there is to know about music theoretically), took it into her head to learn a long, extremely difficult sonata which was a favourite of Liszt's, and succeeded in playing it very creditably.

When I look back on these few years of my girlhood there rises up before me such a crowd of interesting personalities that I wonder how I had time to know and appreciate them all. Yet each is as distinct as those I met but yesterday. America seemed frightfully far away, but one after another almost all my mother's old friends found their way to Rome. Lothrop Motley and his daughters were constant visitors at our house one winter. I was rather in awe of the distinguished historian whose wonderful opening chapter of the "Rise of the Dutch Republic" had been always held up to me as the model of pure and impassioned English. Ah, the English that highly educated Americans spoke in those days I shall never hear again! It was the pure incisive language of Addison and Pope, faultless in construction, delicately balanced, and delivered in clear musical tones which were a joy to the ear. Even the dear Sewells had nothing like it, and they spoke better than any English people I ever listened to. In my many wanderings I have often been amused, and irritated too, by the remarks of my husband's countrypeople. "*You* an American?" they would cry. "Why, it seems impossible! You don't speak like one." I always replied, "I try to speak like the Americans who taught me, but I have been too much with English people to succeed."

Mr. Motley did not talk much, but what he said

was always worth listening to, though he spoke in a very quiet, modest way, and did not at all take it for granted that his listeners might agree with him. I was quite young when he came to Rome, but he was very kind to me and took trouble to encourage me to persevere with my serious reading, which was being endangered just then by a too sudden plunge into the world of romance. His eldest daughter, Mrs. Ives, was in deep mourning. She had been married a month when her husband, a brave, handsome boy, was killed in one of those fierce, useless battles of the Civil War. She seemed utterly broken-hearted, poor girl. Her younger sister, Susie Motley, was full of fun and nonsense; she was one of those irrepressibles whom not even a family tragedy can subdue for more than a very short time. Mrs. Ives was so young—and so attractive—that people hoped that life would still show her a bright side; and after several years it did, for she married a distinguished Liberal M.P., and must have found an endless source of interest and amusement in the renowned statesman's career.

Our other historian, Prescott, I do not remember, but he had also been an early friend of my mother's, and she told me that he was distinctly an original, passing in his own family for a hopeless idler who would never come to any good. His relations were constantly imploring him to do something useful, to take up some respectable career instead of sitting all day locked up in his library—eating soap! He used to keep a cake of this on his writing-table and nibble at it constantly, saying when he was remonstrated with that people should be clean inside as well as out. Except for the soap and the inkstand, the table was always bare when any one gained admittance to the room; but it had deep drawers. For

ten long years Prescott bore all his family's reproaches in complete silence, never once excusing or explaining his conduct. Then he produced his first great historical work, and it was the family's turn to apologize.

Another friend was dear Lowell, smiling, low-voiced, with deep, observant eyes. I do not think I appreciated his poetry then as much as I did later, but the man attracted me greatly, and in consequence it used to make me furious to feel that I could never make him take me seriously. By the time he came to see us I took myself very seriously indeed, and delivered my impertinent little opinions with complete self-confidence. I remember so well the slow turn of the head and the amused glance he cast upon me as he sat beside me at dinner. "You really think that?" he said in answer to a scornful pronunciamento of mine on modern American fiction. "Oh, *well*——" and then came a quiet smile—and he went on with his dinner. I could have thrown my plate at him!

He wrote sparingly, and some of what he wrote will not live, but I think there is little in modern humour to compare with the "Biglow Papers"; and for the poetry that goes to the aching heart of things, what can be more poignant than the lines written after his wife's death, those that end:

> "That little shoe in the corner
> Talks all your arguments down"?

or the stanza in the "Vision of Sir Launfal" where the transformed beggar rises up in all His Divinity before the humbled, broken-hearted knight who has given Him his last crust, and tells him the secret of true charity:

> "Who gives himself with his gift feeds three,
> Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me"?

Other distinguished men from over the water came to us in those years. I shall never forget an evening—almost a whole night—that the elder Agassiz passed with us. He had come out with a scientific party to watch the transit of Venus from some remote spot in Southern Europe, I think, and, when he and my dear mother had talked out their joy in meeting again after so many years, he gathered us round him and gave us an account of the great stellar event, with a fulness and lucidity that brought abstruse mathematical calculations within the reach of our minds and would have convinced a casual listener that his life had been devoted to the study of astronomy alone. He must have talked for several hours, and they seemed to us like minutes when he ended. There was something about Agassiz which I missed even in Lowell, and do miss in the make-up of most learned Americans [1]—vitality. They may be truly learned, courteous, and refined, but the temperament seems to be below par. Could one test it with a clinical thermometer, I am sure it would fall short of normal heat—the point at which in corporeal sickness the physician prescribes stimulants. The nice, good, cultured American strikes us more vigorous Europeans as either fundamentally effete or temporarily under-vitalized. You can never get a good hot flame or a hard hit out of him. He is more of an eclectic than a producer—an intellectual epicurean, whose loves and hates are represented by a careful yet tepidly neutral attitude of criticism or approval. But two or three whom I have known did not come into this category, and Agassiz was one of them. Everything about him was big, individual, definite; and of the things that appealed

[1] Though Swiss by birth, Agassiz had lived so much in America that he comes justly under this classification.

to him he could speak as a lover speaks of his mistress, with flashing eyes and ringing voice.

Bayard Taylor was another who seemed most fully alive and brought nameless inspiration with him. I saw a great deal of him at one time—and had learnt a little humility then, so that I was glad enough to listen deferentially to his flow of talk. He was very much captivated by Rome, I think, and enjoyed every minute of his stay there, in spite of the fact that he was mercilessly lionized by all the hostesses who could get hold of him. I remember one horribly crowded party when everybody in turn was brought up to shake hands with him, as if he had been a newly elected President. He was a big, broad-shouldered man, noticeable in any room, and when I caught sight of him the obligatory smile on his face had lasted so long that it had set into a contortion. With the boldness of youth I set about freeing him, and was rewarded by the sigh of relief he breathed when I drew him away to talk or be silent as he liked. I at least was not a gushing stranger!

After the war was over some of its heroes came to refresh themselves by a look at Italy. General Grant was one. There was no deficiency of vitality there. As I remember him he was a burly, thick-set soldier, with a strong, ugly face and twinkling eyes that seemed to find amusement in everything. His laugh was contagious, but so loud it drowned the echoes it roused. One was glad to be in the same room with him—he had the very aura of success, and everything young and hopeful was drawn towards it irresistibly.

Sherman was a much more polished soldier, a more complicated, introspective person altogether. Exquisitely groomed, his gold lace much brighter than that on

Grant's rather worn uniform, his handsome face amiably immobile, he struck one as a man who still found time to ask what others thought of him, a consideration which I do not believe Ulysses S. Grant ever entertained for a moment during his whole life. Sherman seemed to enjoy the lionizing—Grant evidently regarded it as a huge joke.

McClellan too came to Rome, but a cloud hung over him, the cloud of disappointment. He was disappointed with his career, which had been neither altruistic nor successful, and his countrymen felt that they had cause to be disappointed in him. So much was expected of his talents and character when he was raised to the chief command of the Federal Army in 1861, so much was lost by his inexplicable hesitations and procrastinations afterwards, that he had to carry through life the suspicion of having failed in courage. His political aspirations had been rudely nipped when he ventured to come forward as a candidate for the Presidency beside two such men as Lincoln and Johnson, and the fact that he resigned his commission in the Army on the day of the election —while the war still raged between North and South— cast a serious slur on his patriotism.

Far and away the most interesting and loveable of our visitors was Longfellow. As a child I had learned almost all his poems by heart; by the time I had done growing up I loved them better for his sake than for their own. Perhaps it is true that he was lacking in some of the qualities which go to make a really great poet, but he wrote of high, inspiring things in lovely metres and gravely beautiful English. His poetry, in its harmony and simplicity, is comprehensible to the capacity of a child, yet must always keep its place among the recognized classics of our age.

As life goes on, one's mind comes to resemble a many-times-inscribed palimpsest: in the early years good things are written on the clean blank page, things which disappear under the manifold scorings of fuller and more ardent periods. But when these in turn have passed by, their requirements satisfied, their harvests, whether good or evil, garnered, the records of them mostly fade out, and the simpler, richer impressions of intellectual childhood show forth once more, bringing the old conviction with them, and causing one to ask why one should have had to travel so far only to return gratefully to the original starting-place?

When Longfellow came to us in Rome my appreciation of his writings was temporarily obscured. I had flung myself with all the eagerness of my age into the works of Victor Hugo, Musset, Théophile Gautier—even Swinburne, with the exception of certain portions which my sister Annie made me promise not to read; and the fiery exuberance and colour of my new loves had made the old beacons look very pale and dim, though they shine out kindly now. It was the man himself who captivated my admiration when I saw him at last. His name had been a household word among us as long as I could remember. In youth he was my mother's playmate, friend, and very nearly something more; but, perhaps because she had known him all her life, she could not go so far as to fall in love with him. His "Maiden with the meek brown eyes" was written to her younger sister, my Aunt Annie, who, I think, deflected a little of the romantic affection he cherished for my mother towards her demure, gentle self. Life separated them all quite early. Longfellow was twice married; the tragic end of his second wife—she was burnt to death—very

nearly broke his heart. But there was no crushing that strong, serene nature, and the sharp sorrow only carried his love and faith to a higher, less vulnerable plane.

In his age he seemed to be enjoying a wealth of calm happiness; the glance of his eyes—so young in their deep clear blue—was like that of a prophet sent to prophesy good things. There was a leonine confidence, too, about the broad forehead and square face framed with thick white hair and beard that shone like silver new from the mint. His features were bold and regular—my mother said he had been wonderfully handsome as a boy—and his voice had a pleasant ripple that altogether belied his age, and made his reading a great treat to his hearers. One of our most memorable days with him was spent at Sant' Onofrio, the convent on the Janiculum where Tasso lived for awhile, and died. It was Longfellow's first visit to the place, and it seemed almost as if the great Italian's spirit had returned there to welcome the man who knew his work so well and had translated it so perfectly. We kept silence while the poet from over the sea moved about the room examining one relic and another, and gazing long and lovingly on the waxen cast taken when death had set its seal of peace on the worn yet noble features so deeply scored with the sufferings of life. Then we drew him away, and led him out to the little ruined fane on whose semicircle of marble seats the Arcadians used to sit and look out over the city, while one and another of their number recited or improvised poems and tales in the shade of a little grove of which but one tree now remains—Tasso's oak.

It was a perfect afternoon of the Roman spring. Where the hill sloped steeply from our feet little almond trees were in bloom, filling the air with their unreal yet

haunting perfume. The Tiber ran below, full and yellow, and breaking into spray round the piers of its many bridges; and beyond, the whole vast city lay in its matchless richness of colour and architecture, each church and palace and monument standing out clear and distinct, yet all blending in a haze of topaz and sapphire, till Rome looked like one great liquid jewel, melting and spreading over her Seven Hills. A little breeze came up from the west and the Campagna, bringing scents of mint and wild jonquils, and now and then the faint tinkle of sheep-bells from the great flocks that roamed at will over that empty twenty miles of forsaken beauty. All were silent for awhile, we, the native-born, and our poet, the stranger from a newer, harder land, who had indeed visited Rome in his youth, but, with all his appreciations matured, told us that he felt that he was now *really* seeing her for the first time. Then he opened his Tasso and read to us, sitting where Tasso used to sit, his favourite canto in the "Gerusalemme Liberata.

When he closed the book the sun was setting on a day that will stand out for ever in my memory. We carried him home with us and kept him all the evening. He seemed to belong to us, and we were a little jealous of the quietly watchful son and daughter who used to take him away, fearful, I think, lest the highly charged atmosphere of the Palazzo Odescalchi should prove too wearing for him. But he fitted in so well there, seemed so content and satisfied in those sumptuous, flower-filled rooms, that when, a few years ago, I visited the bare little house in Portland, Maine, where he was born, I said to myself, "*My* Longfellow never belonged here; he was far more at home with us in the old Odescalchi!"

CHAPTER XVIII

TWO POPES AND A GREAT CARDINAL

The Palazzo Odescalchi—Pope Innocent XI.—Palazzo Savarelli—"Tolla"—Nameless visitants—The shadow ghost of the ball-room, the mysterious coach, and their sequel—The unavenged chasseur—The apparition of the sham door—Sights from the Palace windows—Pius IX. and the drawer of his writing-desk—Two presentations—Cardinal Antonelli—The worst-hated man in Rome—My first meeting with him at the Vatican—The Cardinal's ring-box—"One might have to take an unexpected journey!"

I AM sure my dear mother's many friends will forgive me if I pause to say a few words about the Palazzo Odescalchi, where she lived, with one short break, for over thirty years. It had not the magic surroundings of my birthplace, the old, old villa on the upper outskirts of the city, but it became as truly a home to us; and though I never ceased to regret the Negroni garden, and visited it as long as it existed, yet the ease and spaciousness of the more modern house, its nearness to galleries and libraries and the dwellings of friends, made it an ideal place for a growing girl to live in; and the not unkindly shadow of weird romance that hung over it appealed strongly to my imagination.

Of course it was built by a Pope, Innocent XI., who reigned from 1676 to 1689, during the doom-laden period when it seemed as if Islam might descend with fire and sword upon the very Vatican itself. Even the Protestant historians admit that Innocent XI. was an "able and zealous Pontiff," as indeed he needed to be,

for the times were evil. In the year of his accession Poland had been forced to sign a treaty of peace with the Turks, at Zurawno—a deep humiliation for Christendom at large; then the renegade Hungarian, Count Tekeli, led his ever unmanageable countrymen into a revolt against Austria, which was prolonged for five years; and crowned his achievements by calling in the followers of Mohammed to help him resist his Christian sovereign. The Turks responded joyfully to his appeal by proceeding to besiege Vienna; and had not John Sobieski forced them back, some of us in Southern Europe would probably have been subjects of the Porte at this day. We may be sure that Pope Innocent did some very strenuous praying during those alarming years. He had also to contend with Molinos and the Quietists, the new sect which maintained that, since all good comes from God, man need make no conscious effort to pray or to ensure his own salvation. A frightful incursion of the plague visited Italy just at that time (of which Shorthouse gave such a vivid description in "John Inglesant"); and the poor Pope was besides constantly worried by disputes with the French King and the French Bishops.

All the same, he found time to build one of the most princely of Roman palaces opposite that of the Colonnas, who doubtless looked down upon the Odescalchis as mere modern upstarts when Innocent XI.'s more imposing pile rose up across the way, occupying, with its courtyard, the entire block between two streets, and running back as far as the Corso. At right angles to the church and the Odescalchi stands the Palazzo Savarelli, where the lovely heroine of About's romance, "Tolla," broke her heart and died while I was at school

in England. Annie saw her carried out to her grave. She was the last to be borne thither after the old Roman fashion for young girls, in an open coffin, dressed like a bride, with orange flowers in her hair and a pretty touch of pink on her cheeks. The populace very nearly lynched her faithless lover that day.

Opposite to my own windows rose the bell-tower of the Santi Apostoli, the church where Michelangelo, as a devout parishioner, used to go to Mass. No such illustrious memory haunted our house; but we had one or two nameless visitants from the other world, who clung to us faithfully enough. One was a gentle shade—really a shade and no more—to whom I grew so accustomed that I used to pause to say good-night to him as I passed through the ball-room on my way to bed. The ball-room was fifty feet square, and high in proportion, with three tall windows opening to the floor, and protected by iron balconies, through the scroll-work of which the light of the lamps in the Piazza was thrown high on the farther wall of the apartment at night. The walls were hung with white silk, painted with peacock feathers; every panel set deep in fretwork of gold, and separated from the next by a great mirror. There were six double doors, of which the panels were mirrors too, framed in gilt carving, and surmounted by lunettes containing delicate little landscapes, the whole thing carried out in the best style of the First Empire.

We did not use the room much; it served chiefly as a playroom for the children until we built a little theatre there; but, as Roman palaces are never furnished with corridors, we had to pass through it constantly if we wished to avoid the other side of the house where the drawing-rooms opened into it. My good stepfather had

a passion for small economies; and no light illuminated the ball-room at night except that thrown up from the street-lamps below. As soon as darkness fell and these were lit, three squares of radiance showed on the white silk of the opposite wall. Two were empty but for the shadows of the intersecting balcony bars; in the third stood the figure of a man in early eighteenth century costume, leaning pensively on the railing, his head on his hand, as if looking down at us. The whole figure was as clearly outlined as the scroll-work of the iron, which it quite eclipsed. No matter who came or went, the shadow man was always there. We and our young friends used to stand in the same window, and amuse ourselves with grouping our shadows round his; but his still showed through, as if painted on the wall. Closing or opening the glass made no change in the motionless figure. One night my brother Marion grew irritated with its persistent presence; some one suggested that it might be due to a freak in the glass of the lanterns below. Marion ran downstairs and smashed them all, and came racing up again before the police could catch him, to see if he had destroyed the wraith too. Not a bit of it. There it was, real as ever; and no explanation of it has yet been offered. But I found the shadow man's portrait a few years ago, when a friend who had been making a collection of Piranesi's splendid engravings of Roman buildings brought me one for a present.

"This is the Odescalchi, your old home," he said; "I think you ought to have it."

Every detail of the well-known architecture stood out in the dazzling black-and-white of the print, and there, leaning out of the balconied window, his head resting on his hand, looking pensively down on the world below, was

my old friend the shadow man. The original of another ghost had been caught in the picture as well. Night after night, between twelve and one, I have watched a great lumbering coach drive into the empty Piazza, and stop noisily under my bed-room window, before our second *porte cochère*, one which had always been walled up in my time. The coach door was opened, a dark figure jumped quickly out, said "Buona notte" to some one inside, the coach drove on a few yards—and then the whole thing disappeared. There was neither coach nor passenger in the empty Piazza.

In the Piranesi engraving the coach was passing the great door, evidently still in use when the artist made his drawing. I wonder what the story was. My mother used to declare that in certain rooms of the Odescalchi the "very walls sweated wickedness"; they must have seen more than one tragedy in their two hundred years of existence. As I have said, there were only five palaces in our Piazza; it was known that in one of them a man had been walled up alive. But no one of the owners would admit that this had taken place in his house; each shouldered the reproach off on his neighbour. The Romans as a rule take no interest in the history of their dwellings. They are light-hearted people with a healthy dislike of horrors, and it is very hard to drag family stories from them, for most of the stories are tinged with tragedy of some kind. The apartment in which we lived had at one time been occupied by an Austrian Ambassador, who had killed his chasseur in a fit of rage. As an Ambassador he could not be called to account for the crime; his temporary domicile was sacred soil, and no questions could be raised as to what he saw fit to do there. The poor unavenged chasseur never gave any trouble till my

mother brought an Austrian woman back with us from Vienna to wait on my small brother and sister. Then, apparently encouraged by the presence of a compatriot, he used to appear to her as she sat sewing in the nursery of an evening. She had never heard the story, but she described his costume with great exactness, and, strange to say, was not in the least disturbed by his presence. "He never comes farther than that door," she said to me once, pointing to one which led into the ball-room; "he stands quite still and never says anything. Why should I mind the poor fellow?"

One of the doors in the ball-room was a sham one, put into the wall for the sake of symmetry. Behind it, from top to bottom of the house, rose a great blind shaft, called in Rome the "pozzo nero" (the black well), and introduced into most of the larger palaces for two purposes—to strengthen the building by its hugely thick walls, which form a kind of central pillar to strengthen things generally; and, until modern drainage was invented, to receive refuse of every kind, this being carried up to the roof and pitched down into it. In some houses its locality had been forgotten. The Duchess of San Teodoro (afterwards Lady Walsingham) took my godfather's apartment in the Palazzo Bonaparte for one or two winters. All went well at first, and then suddenly the place became insupportable; the most horrible odours filled every room. Experts were called in, and after prolonged investigation located a "pozzo nero," the existence of which had not even been suspected, filled to the top with garbage—and worse. The masonry had sprung a leak somewhere and the poison was filtering through.

The one in our house gave no such evidence of the savage habits of a past generation, but it made one feel

rather creepy to know that the walls of our pretty rooms were backed by this pillar of empty blackness some fifteen feet square, and one night my sister Annie had a terrifying experience in connection with it. We were all owls as to late hours, but she was the latest of all, often reading or playing the piano till nearly dawn in her own room, which was so far away that no sound from there ever reached the rest of us at the other end of the apartment. She was not a fanciful person at all, but she had a kind of fear that she might meet a burglar, so if she had occasion to wander about the house at night she always came out fully armed—with a pair of nail-scissors! One night she had gone to fetch a book from the room where we had been sitting, and was crossing the ball-room on the way back, candle in one hand and scissors in the other, when, to her horror, across the great dark space, she saw the mirrored frame of the sham door begin to open, very slowly, inch by inch, till it swung wide. Then—Something came out. Poor Annie fell on the floor in a dead faint. When she recovered consciousness she was lying there in complete darkness; her candlestick had rolled out of reach; she was still clutching the scissors, but they had ceased to inspire any confidence, and she had to find her way to a door—shivering lest she should strike that one—and get to her room as best she could. No question or persuasion could ever prevail upon her to tell us what it was that she had seen—all that she desired was to forget it as soon as possible.

But with all this the Odescalchi was sunny, cheerful, and admirably adapted for the kind of entertaining that young people love—theatricals improvised or long prepared, harum-scarum dances and solemn concerts, croquet

matches of an evening in the ball-room, or, best of all, some fortuitous gathering of kindred spirits towards midday, when everybody had so much to say that the dinner table had to be enlarged in the evening and we did not break up till midnight. There was plenty of room for us and the ghosts too. Only in Italy could people of moderate means have been housed as we were. I think my mother paid two hundred pounds a year for an apartment, unfurnished of course, comprising eighteen or twenty large rooms running along the entire front of the second floor, flooded with sunshine, panelled, painted, the walls hung with silk, every door a study of decoration, the very window-shutters bevelled and gilded till it was a pleasure to handle them. I had a bed-room thirty feet square, painted to resemble the inside of a tent, with a classical medallion in each fold of the simulated drapery. Its four doors were so many mirrors ; the long balconied windows looking out on the Piazza, each made an alcove many feet deep ; my writing-table always stood in one, my easel and painting things in another. My sister Annie had established herself at the other end of the house—she always loved remoteness and solitude—and her room was a museum of paintings, books, statues, and bric-à-brac, dominated by a piano and a head of Beethoven, a cast from my father's statue which stands in the Boston Music Hall. There she could play all night if she liked without disturbing anybody. Upstairs was a warren of offices and servants' quarters where our menservants lived with their wives and families, and down in the courtyard were good stables where our horses and carriages were kept, with the tame nanny-goat that our coachman, true to Roman traditions, insisted on having there to amuse the horses.

After my sister Annie and I were married, my mother

and stepfather moved into a smaller apartment in one of the wings of the house; but it was arranged on the same lines: they had all their household gods about them, the sun shone into it all day, and when I used to return from my diplomatic wanderings to visit them I forgot even to notice the change.

I have seen wonderful sights from the front windows of the Odescalchi. It was in 1868, I think, that Pius IX. came in state to the church of the Santi Apostoli, where, if my memory is not at fault, the original resting-place of St. Philip and St. James had just been discovered. That day every window in the Piazza was hung with the long crimson silk draperies kept in every family for such occasions; the entire route from the Vatican to the church door had been covered with fine yellow sand and strewn with box and laurel; the Piazza itself was garlanded from end to end, and of course crowded with people. The Zouaves in their picturesque uniforms were on duty to keep order, and more than one so far forgot discipline as to look up at our windows and smile at us. Then came the splendid display of the Noble Guards, and close behind them the Holy Father in his state coach, the last time he ever used it. I think it was the same in which he had re-entered Rome in triumph in 1850 after the Revolution, a scene of which Von Moltke, who was present, gives an impressive description. It was a great gilt thing, shaped more like a boat than a carriage, swinging easily on enormously long straps behind the four black horses, all caparisoned in white and gold, the Papal colours. The sides were all of glass, and Pius IX's pale noble countenance was clearly visible to the kneeling people as he raised his hand to bless them. How they cheered him! and how happy and serene he looked! I

had been taken to see him once or twice already after I was grown up, and all my early impressions had been revived and confirmed. His kind clear glance, his look of gentle regret when he was told that I had not yet been received into the Church, the few grave words he said, and the encouraging smile, and the blessing at parting, all had been treasured up in my heart, and it was always a red-letter day for me when I caught a glimpse of his face.

Although the times were troubled he still took his drives outside the city walls, and our favourite roads seemed to be his too, for we often met him "fuori di porta." Etiquette required that we should stop our carriage, descend, and kneel as he passed, and then we were always rewarded by a smile of recognition and a special blessing all to ourselves. The Marchese Girolamo Cavalletti (known to all his friends as "Momo"), to whom I have already alluded more than once, was constantly in attendance on him in the Vatican, and used to tell us day by day what had been happening there. The Pope looked upon him as a beloved son, and Momo took advantage of his privileges to induce him sometimes to humour his health by modifying the Spartan frugality of his diet, which was much plainer than we were expected to furnish for our servants. A cup of black coffee in the morning after Mass, one dish and a little thin cheese or fruit, with a glass of thin cheap wine for dinner at midday, and a good deal less for supper,—this was the Pope's menu. Long hours of prayer, still longer ones of business, audiences public and private without end—his only recreation was the drive or short walk in the Vatican gardens in the afternoon. Never did he think of himself, and he counted it a sin to spend even

the tiniest sum for his own comfort or pleasure. All he had of his own went to the poor, to whom he was always accessible, always an eager helper. In his writing-table was one little drawer where all the money he could dispose of was kept to meet their demands. Again and again the little drawer would be opened in the course of the day—and then, when the last penny had been extracted from it, some urgent case would present itself and Momo Cavalletti would be told to go and fetch what was needed. "But, Holy Father," he would exclaim, "we emptied the drawer this morning! There is nothing left!"

"Go and look, my son," the Pope would reply. "Since it is for the poor you will surely find something there." And his calm trust was always justified; there lay the required sum, though an hour earlier Cavalletti himself had taken out all there was. He said that at such moments he wanted to go down on his knees, knowing that he was in the presence of a Saint. But in ordinary life Pio Nono was delightfully genial and witty, and could tell a good story or listen to one with keen appreciation. Some of the "bévues" of the foreigners who attended audiences amused him immensely. There was in those days an unofficial British representative who was charged with all business connected with the Vatican. Our friend Clarke Jervoise, so long a notable figure in the Foreign Office, filled this post for many years, and he told me that of all the trying moments of his life the worst had been when he had to take one over-enthusiastic compatriot to see Pius IX. The language on these occasions had to be French, for the Pope did not speak English, and during the drive to the Vatican Clarke Jervoise took much trouble to explain to his companion

that he must be careful to address the Pontiff as "Saint Père."

By the time they had passed all the guards and secretaries and chamberlains and Monsignori the stranger was trembling with excitement. At last they were ushered into the Pope's presence, and there he threw himself on his knees in a fervour of veneration, exclaiming "*Sacré* Père!" Surely never before had a Pope been sworn at in the heart of the Vatican. Pio Nono kept his countenance and the naughty "cuss" word passed without remark—then; but how he must have laughed afterwards! Clarke Jervoise said that he expected the walls to fall on him, and really never knew how he got his man out of the room.

A genial American capped this feat years afterwards on being presented to Leo XIII. "Sir," he exclaimed, seizing the Pope's hand and shaking it heartily, "I am glad to meet you. I knew your father, the late Pope!"

At some distance from the Pope's rooms in that Vatican labyrinth was a sunny apartment, very stately and remote, where Cardinal Antonelli lived. Pio Nono was the best-loved man in Rome, but his Prime Minister was certainly the worst-hated. Those who knew him and saw him constantly became very much attached to him, and he had kindly human sides; but no one trusted him, except the Pope himself; that trust was worthily placed, for the man was loyal through and through, but it came, in the first instance, of self-distrust. When Pio Nono was elected Pontiff, he was, as I have said before, filled with broad and liberal-minded aspirations, and was prepared to confer on his people a large measure of constitutional government. But he met with black ingratitude and treachery; he had forgiven his condemned enemies,

only to have the liberty he had granted them used for new attacks and insults, and he had lost all his illusions about human nature as demonstrated in popular politics. He felt that he had not understood his people, that his clemency had been nothing but a mistake resulting in disaster. A stronger hand than his was required to rule them, and after his return from Gaeta he decided to relinquish a great part of the arduous task to Antonelli, who, whatever his unpopularity, was a man of keen intelligence, and devoted heart and soul to his master's interests. Antonelli was ruthless in retribution ; he punished the defeated revolutionists with greater severity than he would have employed had he been more sure of the firm attitude of the Pope. As things were he was carrying a heavy responsibility single-handed, and he could not afford to take any chances ; he had the reputation of being unscrupulous and willing to sacrifice many things to gain his ends. Had he gained those ends and succeeded in re-establishing the temporal power on a firm basis, the world would have hailed him as a hero, for few successful statesmen have made a fad of scruples or good faith, and Antonelli's record looks white beside that of some others, Bismarck for instance. But he failed—and since only exceptional virtue can afford to be beaten and remain respected, Antonelli's name will go down to posterity burdened with a good many unjust accusations. His first fault was that he was too credulous a statesman, who could not understand the men on whom he pinned his faith, Napoleon III. and Victor Emmanuel II. He had for so long ascribed honourable motives to both of them that, when their real ones became patent, his policy crumbled into failure —he had nothing to fall back upon. A great deal more

has been said about his private life and his love of riches than the facts support. As to the first it was not vicious, although it had not been altogether immaculate. It must be remembered that his rank of Cardinal was practically a secular one; it made him a Prince of the Church, but it entailed no vow of celibacy, and could, at the time it was conferred upon him, be borne by one who had only taken deacon's orders, and who could, if he wished, return to the world. Antonelli never was ordained a priest. He made no pretence of any ecclesiastic vocation, but, barring one deviation in early youth, his life was quite moral and dignified, giving no room for scandal of any kind.

He was the last secular Cardinal; there had been many before him, but with the general tightening of ecclesiastical discipline it has been decreed that there shall be no more. Only a fully ordained priest can now become a member of the College which elects the Pontiff.

As for his avarice, he did not leave any great fortune behind him, and I think he was more fond of beautiful things than of money for its own sake. I had never met him till the spring of 1867, when he invited my mother to bring me and my sister to spend the afternoon with him. He had a pretty little villa at the other end of the town, near the foot of the Villa Aldobrandini, of which a large part was cut away to make room for the Via Nazionale. Antonelli's place was of course pounced upon, and the garden and the greater part of the house swept out of existence on the same pretence, as soon as the Italians had made themselves masters of Rome. It was curious to note how ingeniously the new streets twisted and turned or widened into squares where there was a possibility of their being made to include property

which belonged to supporters of the Holy Father. The Cardinal spent very little of his time at the Villa Antonelli, only going there now and then for a short holiday, and our visit to him was made at his apartment at the Vatican. I was rather shy at the prospect of meeting the great man, but from the moment he entered the room he made me feel welcome and at ease. In appearance he was a typical South Italian, small in build, dark-skinned, with piercing narrow black eyes that seemed to see everything and tell nothing of what was passing in the busy brain behind them. His face was meant to be mobile, but usually wore a fixed smile which had become a part of his armour. He was a rapidly fluent talker, and at once took all the burden of conversation upon himself, evidently pleased with our naïve admiration of the many beautiful things gathered round him in the room where he received us. It was a large, lofty apartment looking towards the west, hung from ceiling to floor in old crimson damask, and filled, but not crowded, with good paintings, small fine antiques, Cinquecento cabinets, books in rich bindings, and all the other charming objects that a true connoisseur so dearly cherishes. Many were presents from famous people, others offerings from grateful *protégés*. He led us round and told us the history of each, while the sun poured in through the great windows lighting up his fine head, his dark eyes, and the close-fitting scarlet robe and cape which, being in attendance at the Vatican, he was wearing instead of the black one merely piped with red in which he would otherwise have appeared on an unofficial occasion. He had small, delicate hands—the hands of a virtuoso, and they seemed to caress the marble and the carvings very lovingly.

At last he said we must be tired and in need of

refreshment, so he made us sit down and take breath while his major-domo served us with coffee. A Cardinal's major-domo is a special product only to be found in Italy. He is always an elderly man, formed from his earliest youth to the service of ecclesiastics, from whom he has caught a suave urbanity of manner together with a dignity and a habit of silence quite unattainable in any other career. He always has to appear, like his confrères in the world, in full evening dress; but this is accentuated in his case by a much more voluminous white tie, longer tails to his coat, and, when he follows his master abroad, by a taller top hat than has been in fashion in mundane circles for many a year. At processions and ceremonies he has a right to stand or walk immediately behind his prelate, always carrying a green bag to receive the long crimson train the moment the proceedings are over and it can be unhooked from the wearer's shoulders. Cardinal Antonelli's familiar was the finest possible example of the finished product. The air of mournful condescension with which he attended to our wants, piling my plate with marvellous sweetmeats of which I am sure the recipes had been handed down from the famous feasts of the Borgias, said as clearly as possible, "Since my revered master chooses to receive a pack of chattering girls—heretics at that—I must humour him so far as to wait upon you, but you have no business inside these sacred walls, and you know it as well as I do!"

When the little feast was over, and the Prime Minister's Prime Minister had withdrawn, the Cardinal said, "Ladies like gems, I believe. Now I will show you my greatest treasure." Leaving the room for a moment, he returned carrying a small black leather box some six inches square, with a handle on the top. This

he opened with a tiny key; and the room seemed suddenly full of light, for the sun caught and focused on ten rings each set with a glorious jewel. Diamonds, sapphires, rubies, emeralds—the little box contained the Cardinal's fortune in portable form; and every gem was mounted after a design of his own—so rich and artistic that the settings attracted me really more than the jewels themselves. He raised the top tray, and ten more rings showed themselves in the second—among these some perfect intaglios; and below again was a third tray with another ten—thirty rings in all—the collection of a lifetime. "Why does your Eminence keep them in that tiny box?" I asked curiously, when he had closed it again.

He lifted it by the strap, and looked at me with a twinkle in his eyes. "One might have to take an unexpected journey," he replied. "Such things do happen sometimes, you know." Then I remembered 1848 and Gaeta.

Some of my greatest friends were his nephews and their charming mother. They were all devoted to him; and after his brother's death, while the boys were still young, he managed most of their affairs for them. Countess Antonelli was exceedingly good to me; and I very nearly became the Cardinal's niece and her daughter-in-law. I liked her son immensely, but I found it impossible to get up any romance about him; and, at that epoch, I thought romance a necessary factor to at least begin happiness upon. At the critical moment, too, I forgot about the box of rings. I am sure it would have decided my fate had I remembered it in time!

Cardinal Antonelli never had to fly from Rome in

haste, though it must have required all the loyalty, and all the courage of the brave man he was to remain through 1867, when the city seethed with imported revolution—and 1870, when imported revolution triumphed. The real Romans, who were devoted to Pio Nono, never forgave Antonelli for his severity after 1849; and the plotters of the Garibaldi and Mazzini gang regarded him as their greatest enemy—the one man who had nailed his colours to the mast, and would see to it that the Holy Father never yielded one hairsbreadth of his sacred rights. For Antonelli himself there was no such thing as lasting failure. Forsaken and betrayed by all Europe, Rome itself given over to the foe, he still hoped, still believed, that the Pontiff would come into his own again. Opportunism did not enter into his councils; the great cause of the Church's rights, the Church's liberty, claimed his entire allegiance; and no power on earth would have induced him to compromise with the Church's spoilers. He died in 1876, without seeing the amazing resurrection of Pontifical power, spiritual and political, which took place in the reign of Leo XIII., and, God willing, paved the way to some restitution which shall make the Church independent of the Freemasons, desecrators, and atheists who have robbed and hampered and insulted her for forty years. Neither Fate nor history has done justice to Giacomo Antonelli: the first set her face against him, so that all but the bravest of hearts would have been broken in the long, unequal contest; the second has been written—with what wilful misrepresentations!—by his and the Church's enemies, with what blatant ignorance, by self-constituted historians steeped in the darkness of Protestant superstition. Wherever the gallant Cardinal is now, I do

hope he can see the buildings rising up everywhere in Rome to shelter the Religious Orders proscribed and robbed of their property after the invasion of 1870; see the people kneeling down humbly as the Blessed Sacrament is once more carried publicly through the streets to the sick and dying; see the millions of pilgrims from every quarter of the globe crowding to pay their homage to the Vicar of Christ, and the Italian Government—that undeserving gate-keeper of the House of the Lord—receiving them thankfully for the sake of the money they spend.

In the terrible September of 1870, while Bixio's shells were bursting in our house, I was in Florence; and could not get home because the trains were all needed to transport the conquering troops to the beleaguered city. In May 1900 I was in Florence; and could not get home because the troops had asserted their right to assist at the Jubilee, and the trains were crowded with Italian soldiers going to Rome to ask the Holy Father's blessing.

There is an old Roman proverb which says, "God does not pay every day, but His accounts are all squared on Saturdays."

END OF VOL. I

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